



FOOTSLOGGER

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BY

GRAHAM SETON

(LIEUTENANT-COLONEL G. S. HUTCHISON, D.S.O., M.C.)

AUTHOR OF

"THE W PLAN"

"THE GOVERNOR OF KATTOWITZ"

"COLONEL GRANT'S TO-MORROW"

"THE THIRTY-THIRD DIVISION IN FRANCE AND FLANDERS"

"SILESIA REVISITED"

ETC.

With Illustrations

London



From the painting by Bernard Adams, R.C., R.A.

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DEDICATED TO TWO WOMEN
MY MOTHER AND MY WIFE

“PER ASPERA BELLI”

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FOOTSLLOGGER

CHAPTER I

UNTIL I LEARNT MENSA

Baby days—Hampstead—Hutchisons and Waterlows—Huguenots and Highlanders—The arts, crafts and industry—Going to school.

HOW little I can remember of those exquisite days, in which as a baby with downy hair, tucked up in the nest of one end of a perambulator with my twin brother at the other, I gazed with great wide blue eyes at my arboreal affinities in the spring-leaved tree-tops.

The vaguest of vague memories. My Nanny. Elizabeth, her assistant. Pears in a tree beside the gardener's cottage at Great Doods. Thumb-sucking, and bitter aloes.

And there was a wonderful Christmas morning in a great double bed with my twin. We woke early and rushed to our stockings. In each was a curious miniature human head, clownish and ridiculous, which when pinched and squeezed made all kinds of queer grimaces. They smelt good and then they tasted good, but not very good. Dutifully, each one of us ate a half, reserving the other half until later in the morning. Then entered the beaming nurses. Looks of horror and of consternation. Followed emetics. The heads were made of solid india-rubber ! And that's about all.

A very beautiful old lady, my grandmother, her hair coal-black, parted in the centre and drawn down on either side of the head, crowned by a lace cap, with lace also at the throat, used to receive the members of her family upon most Sundays as they returned to their homes in the neighbourhood after attending Divine Service in St. Peter's Church.

Mrs. Waterlow, widow of Alfred Waterlow, printer, brother to Sir Sidney Waterlow, Lord Mayor of London, who gifted to

the people of London their most beautiful park at Highgate, was the old lady. She was accustomed thus to receive the felicitations of her family, seated in an arm-chair in the drawing-room.

From the age of eleven she had been a cripple, but despite this infirmity had given birth to five boys and six girls, two of whom still survive. One of those still living, Beatrice Jameson, my mother, remained for many years a spinster, like Princess Beatrice, to supervise the household of her father at Great Doods in Reigate, then but a village. It was not until after my grandfather's death and the removal of the household to Hampstead that she married my father, James Alexander, of Inverness, a merchant banker, though for many years previously, owing chiefly to a mutual passion for music, they had been very much in one another's society.

At the age of thirty-eight my mother married, and in the following year, 1889, gave birth to a first son, Colin Alexander Gordon, and in the following year to twin boys, Graham Scton and Legh Richmond.

The house of their birth was known as the Three Gables, in Fitzjohn's Avenue, Hampstead, a house which remains, as it did then, of somewhat remarkable and pleasing architecture.

After attending church, we three boys used to visit our grandmother. When aged eight and seven respectively our father died. He had been noted, not only as a mathematician, a quality inherited by the eldest son, but as an Alpine climber; and was one of the first in the conquest of the Matterhorn and made other pioneer and notable ascents in the Swiss Alps. The strain of his Alpine adventures, together with an extraordinary devotion to his duties in the City, brought an end to his life at the age of fifty-two. So that when the three boys used to visit their grandmother, it was in the company only of their mother.

We were admitted by a butler, a very friendly person, in face and person very like the *Punch* drawings of Du Maurier. He had red hair and side whiskers, a Mr. Dewy, whose wife performed offices downstairs. But the Dewys seemed to fade away, and were replaced by a man, certainly after the heart of little boys, if not of their parents, uncles, aunts, and grandmother.

He stood well over six feet in height, and was immensely

strong. With feet astride in the middle of the large hall he used to lift us and throw us almost as high as the glass dome, two stories above, and catch us as we parachuted to the floor. And he had all kinds of amusing tricks. We were permitted to make exciting excursions in the service lift, and to blow peas down the speaking tubes ; and he possessed an extraordinary sense of table decoration. On one occasion, for Sunday lunch, he spread an embroidered antimacassar in the middle of the table. It was not till long afterwards that we learned that this man, so full of delightful surprises, was an inveterate drunkard, and consumed a large part of a very valuable wine cellar.

We were somewhat afraid, especially of our uncles. Rather than take advantage of the formality of being shown into the drawing-room by the butler, we used to peep through the key-hole to see who had arrived, and then gently enter, with trepidation. We made then what was almost an obeisance before our grandmother, whom we kissed by reaching on tip-toe across her foot-stool under the smiles or frowns of uncles, aunts, and elder cousins who were gathered round her chair, like lords- and ladies-in-waiting upon Queen Victoria.

But I have always thought that our fears of our uncles were rather misplaced. Uncle John, John Hill the banker, a Governor of "Barts" and trustee of the Devonshire Club, until the date of his death in 1928, was affectionately known as "Uncle John" by a very wide circle. He was kind and generous with his entertainment in his coaching days, on his houseboat at Henley, and in his spacious house and grounds in Maresfield Gardens, though during my parents' absence in Switzerland he did sometimes descend upon our house and pursue me, the chief malefactor, with a hunting crop, and wag it at me viciously when I took to earth under a table.

The garden of Uncle John's house adjoined that of another uncle by marriage, Alexander Hay, who occupied a mansion, "Nettlestone," in Fitzjohn's Avenue, almost opposite to the Three Gables.

My Uncle Alec had been one of the pioneers of the steel industry, providing the rails for the Grand Trunk Railway and the Canadian Pacific in the western hemisphere ; and in his business, both profitable and successful, he was closely associated with the foundation of firms now of international fame, steel,

iron, coal, shipping, and with the pioneers of the British motor industry.

Uncle Alec and my Aunt Belle had four sons and four daughters, who, some of them, made marriage alliances with those concerned with these great enterprises ; while my Aunt Flo, married to John Hill, the banker, had also five children.

There was Ernest Thornton, who married the youngest daughter of my grandmother, probably one of the first authorities upon port in the world. They lived with three daughters for a great many years in Oporto. On those Sunday mornings one of the chief attractions was a glass of port, wine of most rare vintage. It was Uncle Ernest who was responsible for the selection of the wines set out in decanters in the study for the guests. Each of these decanters had round its neck a silver label, and once, but only once, with the connivance of the tall butler, I changed these labels about. I then experienced the childish delight in hearing my Uncle Ernest grow expansive about the wonderful vintage. He poured out a glass for each of his admiring friends and relations ; and then, with the fine phrases on his lips as to the colour, bouquet, and body, I saw horror grow on his face as he raised the glass and noted the deeper brown and with his nose smelt the heavier perfume of a sherry. The scene which followed is quite indescribable, except that my little legs carried me up the double stairway with far fleetest foot than that of the outraged uncles who pursued me. But I should have refrained from giggling aloud ; and possibly I might have saved myself a terrible whacking, if I had watched the pantomime, or tragedy, in silence and enjoyed my laugh with my brothers, and possibly with the butler at a more suitable moment, later on.

It must always be interesting for those who have any faith in the principles of eugenics, who are students of biology and psychology, to examine the history, characteristics, and environment of their forbears. For without doubt, both medicine and science have established the incontrovertible fact that heredity plays a principal part in the formation of individual character. How far the influence of heredity also shapes the character of individual inclinations, for good or evil, is quite another matter, although the Freudian school will have it that heredity and environment predestine the individual throughout the whole course of life.

My Uncle Alfred wrote on his eightieth birthday, " I have

always greatly appreciated our Highland descent, giving capacity, level-headedness, perseverance, thrift, and other good qualities."

The earliest authentic trace of the Hutchison family is the name of a great-grandfather, Peter Hutchison, who was in the East India House service, a citizen of Inverness, where my grandfather, James, was also born. Peter married Jane Anderson, granddaughter of one James Clarke, a merchant of Inverness. It is recorded that he was "a loyalist and a man of substance," who after the battle of Culloden was asked by the Duke of Cumberland to present himself at the Court, but he replied simply that "he had none to prefer."

In the cemetery of Ardersier, beside Fort George, are the records of many of those who appear in the family tree, dating from 1730, Camerons, Frasers, Gardners, McUisden (Hugh's son—Hutchison).

James Hutchison's kinsman, who lived at Fort George, was General Sir Alexander Anderson of the 42nd Highlanders. He commanded the 11th Portuguese Regiment in the Peninsular War, and is pictured in the famous painting of the death of Moore at Corunna, with his kinsman, General Gardner, lifting the dying soldier. "Alexander Anderson was covered in wounds and honours and was present at all the principal engagements in the Peninsular War and subsequently at Waterloo." A ring given to him by George IV is in the possession of the family.

It is recorded that the "Jacobites ransacked Clarke's house before the battle of Culloden, carrying off hogsheds of choice wines, and the larder; and while the battle raged, the eldest daughter was hid in a large chest by her nurse."

My grandfather, James, married Eliza Evill. Her brothers, William and Henry, respectively owned the Glenfield Starch Company, and Schweppes, which Henry founded, and later, as Chairman of the company, sold it to Hooley as one of the first company-promoting deals in advertised proprietary commodities.

My paternal grandmother lived to over eighty years of age, and though in her old age she was greatly impoverished, she carried a fine presence, crowned by a head of magnificent shining white hair and silken curls on either side of her head. The Evill family trace their descent from the battle of Hastings, one Yeoville, whose name appears on the roll of Battle Abbey, having been its first founder.

It is interesting to record that my grandmother's mother was the sister of Frederick Gye, the great operatic impresario, whose genius brought the Royal Italian Opera, Covent Garden, of which he was lessee, to its pinnacle of fame. It was he who produced Mario, Grisi, Patti, and other stars. He was, too, lessee of Vauxhall, to which in those days all fashionable London used to flock.

His son Ernest married Albani, the great *prima donna*; while the Gye descent is direct from the first Viscount Nelson of Trafalgar, Duke of Bronté.

When I was stationed as a subaltern of the 3rd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders at Fort George in 1913, I used often to visit old Susan Gardner (granddaughter of Sir Alexander Anderson) at Cromal Lodge, Fort George, and she possessed the most vivid memories of my grandfather and of a whole string of family connections; the Caldwells, Seamans, Tyrwhitt-Drakes, Tolmies, Peachey, besides a host of stories, carried from one generation to another, of the battle of Culloden and of the valorous deeds of her grandfather, who at Waterloo served as secretary to the Iron Duke.

My father, in the firm of Frühling and Goschen of Austin Friars, always held the leading position in the firm, signed for it as head of the staff, a position also held by my grandfather, who retired on a handsome pension, which he enjoyed for many years, dying in his seventy-eighth year. Under their leadership the firm developed into one of the merchant principalities of London.

It is most remarkable that this banking firm, the possession of German Jews, should have been carried to the height of its prosperity by two generations of Highlanders.

The heraldic arms of the Hutchison family are a mailed fist, raised, holding a short sword with the motto "*Per aspera belli*"—"By stress of wars."

My mother's family, the Waterlows, were Huguenot weavers, who at the time of the massacre came as migrants with many others to this country. The family is easily traceable as De Vottelot and is described in the register for Alençon.

Armorial bearings were granted on the 23rd January, 1697, and these bearings are registered in Bernay in Normandy. Originally the armorial bearings consisted of a lion rampant and skull and cross-bones, a feature of the skull being that it possessed no lower jaw. There was added to it a boat sailing

on the sea beneath a fleur-de-lis ; and the full arms, now held by the Waterlow family, were granted by patent to my grandfather on 6th February, 1881, with the motto "*Per mortem vinco.*"

I was reminded upon the Flanders battlefields more than once of the Flemish blood which ran in my veins. In November 1914 I was billeted in the textile works of Waterlot at Armentières in the Rue de Nieppe ; and again at High Wood near Bazentin in July 1916, there lay immediately on my right and in close view the brick ruins of a homestead known for generations as Waterlot Farm. This farm, a German stronghold, was the scene of some of the most bitter hand-to-hand fighting during the battle of the Somme. Throughout Flanders there are traces of the Waterlow family, and the name occurs and re-occurs in many of its towns and small villages.

The name of Waterloo is first found at Canterbury, in 1633, on the marriage registers of the Society of Protestant Refugees, called "Walloons." The language of the "Walloons" was the ancient unadulterated Gaulish. There is evidence to allow of an ancient conviction that all of the name now in England have descended from Walran Waterlow living in Canterbury with his wife, son, and daughter, in the year 1633.

The name of Waterlow, with and without the final "w," was and still is a very frequent occurrence in the registers at Valenciennes and Lille, and indeed so numerous were the persons of the name in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries entered on the registers, that at this time the difficulty of identifying any particular family is almost insuperable.

The registers were compiled in pursuance of an enactment of the 20th November, 1696. Prior to that date there does not seem to have been any special restriction as to the use of arms, and representations were frequently made to the sovereign, by the nobility, that burghers, merchants, and other persons to whom no grant of arms had ever been made, were in the habit of using certain armorial bearings or seals bearing devices in the nature of arms. The king seems not to have noticed their complaints until it was suggested that a good deal of money might be made out of a registration system, and accordingly he put what is called by one writer "a tax upon vanity" (*impôt sur la vanité*), and it is said the "establishment of the 'Armorial General'" was nothing but a financial measure.

From the "Armorial General Manuscripts" the following entry appears :

DEPARTEMENT DE L'ILLE
L'ILLE

Suivant l'ordre du Rcg** 1^{er}

(Here follow the particulars of entries for the Town of Lille, after which come those of Cambray, Douay, Tournay, Valenciennes and Menin.)

(388)

(Folio 1033.) 20^r—Antoinette Waterloo—Veuve de N——
Cliquar.

Porte sable à une tete de mort d'or, soutenue de deux os
de même passcz en sautoir

	Douay
Departement de Lille	Valenciennes
	Menin

The good widow Antoinette, God rest her bones, no doubt beneath the soil of some Flanders battlefield, mingled with the blood of her ancestors, whose children were exiled from Flanders for a belief, can never have dreamed that the posterity of her flesh and blood would return to fight on Flanders' fields that liberty, greater than that of Huguenots, might be given to the world.

In four generations the Waterlos were already in Spitalfields, and worshippers at Walloon Church in Threadneedle Street, A.D. 1700. As early as the last decade of the eighteenth century, in the direct descent, one Josiah had contracted a marriage with the daughter of a Scot, John Robertson of Glasgow, and his grandson, Alfred James, who also married a Scottish lady, Isabella Jameson, was my grandfather.

The family has been for several generations closely associated with the corporate life of the City of London, having given four generations of Common Councillors, three generations of Aldermen, and three Sheriffs and two Lord Mayors to the City, a record not held by any other family in the country, nor is it matched by any other family as to civic dignity in any of the great capitals of the world.

Originally weavers, the processes in their craftsmanship being

allied, the Waterlows, four generations ago, set up a first printing works in Peckham. This grew rapidly. My great-uncle, Sir Sidney Waterlow, quarrelled with my grandfather Alfred ; and it was decided to break the firm into two entities. While Sidney kept the home, Alfred took the foreign and colonial business. But while the home business developed tremendously in power and importance, with very substantial Government contracts in the printing of stamps and bank-notes, the firm of Waterlow Brothers and Layton gradually declined. It was not until my cousin William Alfred Waterlow, who had been a solicitor, took charge of the business in Upper Thames Street, that fresh vigour was instilled into the business.

By tremendous hard work and personal frugality he raised it to a position of importance equal with that of the firm of Waterlow and Sons. Within twenty years, he amalgamated the two businesses, and became Chairman of the Board of Directors, subsequently retiring and crowning his achievement, while still a young man, as the second Waterlow to occupy the dignity of Lord Mayor of the City of London.

I scarcely remember my father. For two years before his death he had suffered from a complete break-down, and while he was mostly in a nursing home and seldom with us, my mother lived in the rambling vicarage of Southborough, which possessed a peahen in the garden, a bird which evoked the most awful noises. Then we were in Tunbridge Wells and at Cowden, a charming village in Sussex, and at Bournemouth.

But of those earliest impressions I recollect the oddest collection. At Cowden I threw a stone into a wasps' nest, and escaped with one sting, while my unfortunate brothers received the full force of the rage of the angered insects. One of the gardeners at Great Doods hiccupped loudly in the presence of my nurse, and very properly and politely added, "Pardon." His name, appropriately enough, was Broomer, and the expression "Broomer said pardon" lingered for many years as the formal apology of our youth in each and every delinquency.

I was photographed before a bowl of goldfish, with my two brothers, each of us crowned with round astrakhan caps, the same which were worn one winter when we skated over the frozen pools in the roads, accompanying my father to church. And on my birthday, 20th January, he gave me a pond of japanned tin with a magnet which drew along half-submerged fish, a great delight. And there was a governess with a Greuze-like face, a

young Scot, who taught us to read and to write ; and it was by her we were taught to sing " Now the day is over " and " Daisy, Daisy, Give me your answer true," then a popular favourite. I have no doubt that she deeply impressed her personality upon me. Her father had served in a Highland regiment, and she possessed a fund of worldly information into which my curious mind was always boring.

And after one Christmas party, when we three boys had been left in sole charge of a French governess, a Mademoiselle Le Gros, I was arraigned before her charged with breaking two photograph frames in the forbidden Yellow Room. A confession was required, and every kind of penalty was threatened if it were not forthcoming. I remember that with the full sense of a self-imposed martyrdom I volunteered the lie that I was the guilty party, but that I only broke the small one ; and duly expiated the crime in a thrashing. With my brothers, we have frequently discussed the incident, and since none was guilty, we have concluded that a cat must have jumped upon the table and overturned the frames.

Of my impressions, however, those which remain most vividly are of the Hutchison branch of the family. Their Scottish descent and ancestry at the earliest period stirred the blood in my veins ; and my aunts and uncles were a most kindly people, filled with a sense of fun, gay and laughing, although fortune had never favoured them as it had the lives of my mother's family.

My grandmother, a widow, lived in two rooms in Islington, attached to the church of which she was so faithful a disciple. The Hutchisons were followers of the great preacher, Irving, who established the Catholic Apostolic Church, and were peculiarly devoted to its ministry and worship. My Uncle Alfred, a great dandy and a most handsome man of distinguished appearance, had been a rubber planter and then first editor of the *Ceylon Times*. He was one of the first planters of tea, rubber, and cocoa in Ceylon, and was the first exhibitor of a branded cocoa in this country, being given the Certificate of Hygiene at the Great Manchester Exhibition in 1888. My Aunt Edith contracted a most romantic and charming marriage with Major Michell, one of the East India Company's servants, who subsequently commanded the 1st Burmah Regiment and served also as Adjutant-General in India. In those days no man knew its languages, customs, and peoples better. He was a tremendous mountaineer, a member of the Alpine Club,

and his explorations in Sikkim and climbs, even up to 21,000 feet, nearly forty years ago, among the Himalayas, paved the way for the subsequent Everest expeditions. He lived with my aunt, in sublime happiness with four children, to be a pensioner of the East India Company for nearly forty years after his retirement, and his coffin, at his funeral in 1929, carried the Union Jack, his sword, the medal of the Burmah Campaign, and his old campaigning topi.

A family so large, with eleven uncles and aunts on one side, and eight on the other, seldom meets together. It is only at the funeral of a veteran, in my own family well past seventy and usually over eighty years of age, that there is any renewal of acquaintance, and that flood-rush of affection occurs, reviving the play-days of youth. But amid the tears of elders and the curiosity of cousins, the graveside is no place for the renewal of friendship. And so we part again on our various ways; and that is so in the life of every one of the older Victorian families.

But my own experience has been distinctive and unique, for the fact of my first cousin having been the Lord Mayor of London, has brought together to do him honour, and to partake of his most generous hospitality on several occasions during his year of office, all the descendants of Alfred James Waterlow, and in the happiest of circumstances.

And my mother, well over eighty, the doyen of the family, as sprightly and vivacious as are her nephews and nieces, grown portly, bald or white-haired, most of them distinguished in their professions and activities, has always been present. Certainly all of us are active and many of the cousins around sixty years of age, like the Lord Mayor himself, with a third and younger generation, carrying forward the tradition, bloodstock and characteristics which produced, from a Huguenot family, one of the largest business enterprises in the world.

We lived in the earlier days in a double-fronted basemented house with stone steps leading up to its rather pretentious porch, in Lambolle Road. The house faced the road leading from Strathray to it. From the windows on the fourth story, we used privily to watch on Christmas mornings for the arrival of the red-whiskered butler with the iced Christmas cake in tissue paper and laden with parcels.

The memory of this house has largely faded from my mind, but some incidents are quite clear. My nanny used to spread bitter aloes on my fingers to prevent my sucking them. In a

violent fit of temper I seized the heavy blue curtains and brought down the mahogany pole upon my brother's cranium.

In another temper during the absence of my parents in Switzerland, I dragged a great handful of hair out of my brother's head, and the hair was carefully preserved on the high overmantel in the nursery, as evidence against me for my parents' return.

I possessed a peculiar delight when out walking with my nurse in dragging down the advertising leaflets of a grocer, Teetgen, in the Finchley Road. This probably was my first association with advertising, and the success of Teetgen's method is proven from the fact that the business is still carried on in the same place.

My particular pride was in driving behind the dark bay horses in my grandmother's carriage. With the exception of the Lord Mayor's coachman, the driver, Vizard, with his rubicund face beneath a cockaded hat, and immense person was probably the best-known coachman in the London of those days.

He drove a magnificent pair of horses and these were remarkable in the Park or when we drove out through Hampstead. Those were most spacious days. Right to the top of Fitzjohn's Avenue, with the exception of a few scattered mansions, the countryside of Hertfordshire and Middlesex stretched green fingers right into the heart of the metropolis.

From the top of the Heath, to the north and west, nothing but fresh pastures and woods could be seen. At Golders Green there was not a single house with the exception of a farm at which my grandmother's carriage used to pull up and my mother or nurse would purchase fresh eggs.

Sometimes we would drive even as far as Mill Hill, through narrow lanes strewn with honeysuckle and meadowsweet, where my Uncle Henry, the brother of Uncle John, possessed a large house and many horses. Hendon was a village with its posting inn and Hampstead Heath still a bleak moor, though on Bank Holidays the people from the poorer parts of the City used to disport themselves on its grass and amid the gorse bushes, with plentiful libations at Jack Straw's Castle and at the Spaniards Inn. Both these inns prior to the advent of motor cars possessed something of their former romantic association with Dick Turpin and other men of the road. Cavaliers riding on the Heath, especially on winter mornings, would draw rein and tie their horses to the rings in the walls of the inns, or handed them over to ostlers, while they warmed the inner man.

From Lambolle Road we moved about the country with my father in his illness ; and when finally he was confined to a nursing home in Sussex, since it was time that we went to school, my mother rented a house of five stories off Haverstock Hill. My elder brother, Colin, was packed off to a boarding school at Walmer, while the twins, driven there in my grandmother's carriage with our luggage on a four-wheeler, went up the hill as boarders to the school of Heddon Court.

I was rather a miserable creature, having outgrown my strength, with spindly legs and a shock of ill-brushed, stiff, straw-coloured hair. While at Bournemouth, I used to attend the rooms of a Mr. Linder, one of the first Swedish culture experts in this country. This Swede used to pummel my stomach unmercifully, and by his methods of massage, to which I am sure I owe an enormous debt of gratitude, he tickled me almost to hysteria. After leaving his sanctum once, almost in a state of collapse, I fell down the steps of his house. The kind gentleman about whom one reads sometimes picked me up and presented me with sixpence, which I expended in an emporium upon a musical instrument consisting of a number of pieces of copper of different lengths, which, to produce a bell-like sound, were hit with a small gong-stick.

I took my household gods with me to school. These were a box of my more treasured soldiers, of which I possessed quite a considerable army, a box of crayon pencils, and a wooden bear which my father had brought me from Switzerland.

For my first night I was placed in a dormitory in which were seven or eight other boys. They were all very curious to inspect my possessions. But I guarded my secrets carefully ; and cried myself to sleep, hiding my head under the blankets holding tightly to my wooden bear. But in my haste one morning during my first few days at school, I forgot the little fellow and left him in my bed, and was held up to the dormitory's derision by a matron whom ever afterwards I hated with a smouldering passion.

My first term at Heddon Court were months of almost unalloyed misery, and in my weekly letters to my mother, apart from other observations, I have recorded this.

"The boy I hate most is Smith here he is. (An illustration.) Jones' uncle died last night he was so unhappy he could not do his lessons and Miss Robinson gave him an impot and a pessme.

A man lost £1,100,000 on horses it said so in the paper. I knew my scripture quite well, but Paul (my twin brother) did not so he will not get his pudding I will. Will you send me three letters this week I am so unhappy at my school. Epps got the 111rd prize for the slow byke race and Tom Osbone the first because he sat quite still and wigled his front weel so much will you make a very nice cake as I know you can do. Do come home soon as I want to come home. I am learning mensa and those sort of things. I hate all the boys Banks says my head smeels. It is a great disipointment to me to have to stay at school with all these nasty boys. Will you send or bring my soldiers I mean ones with shields and bring away the Japense and Chinse. I whant to lend them to a boy called prentice.

With many kisses from your loving friend

G. SETON HUTCHISON."

Poor little distressed and lonely mind, with none of the romance of its playthings, being bombarded with the stupid meaninglessness of mensa, a table. How much more interesting afterwards appeared the teaching by the Modern Language Schools, where instead of the formless learning of grammar, I started to unite one sound with another, being able to declare that "this table is brown, dieser tisch ist braun." But Latin, which, thank heavens, I ceased to learn at the age of fourteen, possessed none of the horrors of Greek with its ghastly hieroglyphics; and of this latter language which I studied for two years I remember nothing whatsoever except some signs from the alphabet and the fact that *βουλο* means "to throw."

This lanky little lad, whose extremities were always so cold that he was nicknamed Skiniggalce and Froggy, seems to have had a very doubtful reception at the school. At any rate, my memories most vivid of the early days at school are those of the most profound misery.

CHAPTER II

EARLY ADVENTURES. THE SCHOOL BESIDE THE SEA

Stallards—The right use of leisure—The lure of the Alps—Walmer—
The choice of a school—St. Clare—Little boys.

STALLARD'S School, with its scarlet cap and blazer carrying a white cross, was then in the first years of its inception. For many years the head master was one of the wisest counsellors that a young man ever possessed in the absence of his father. The school numbered some thirty boarders, some of whom went home for the week-end, and sixty day boys ; and with every year it grew in size and importance.

Most of the boys were the children of the successful business men who had built houses on the outskirts of London. Everything which they possessed was of the best that money could buy ; and I think I must have come under the influence of some inferiority complex, because having very little pocket-money of my own to spend I could not compete with them in the purchase of the finest pomegranates and apples from Camps, the greengrocer, whom we were permitted to visit between school hours.

My twin brother was not subject to such impressions and sailed more sturdily on his way with a complacent mind. The wife of the head master was deeply interested in the cleanliness of cars and used to receive the day boys in the school porch-way and daily to examine them. But this peculiar characteristic was evidence only of a meticulous care throughout the domestic affairs of the school, whose success, as the head master so frequently said, had been largely due to her attention to every department of its hygiene and health.

My first two years at Heddon Court are almost a blank in my memory. Any interest which I had in piano-playing was destroyed by the impatience of a young woman who used to rap my fingers whenever I played a wrong note.

From sheer devilment I turned these exercises in the art of

piano-playing into a game of "hit or miss," and used deliberately to strike a false note and quickly remove my fingers from the keyboard before the spectacled damsel got her shot home. But I did succeed in learning to play, quite faultlessly, one tune from a book entitled *Dam Klavierschule* whose title always amused me; and I can still play this melody with equal lack of fault.

Each of the boarders was presented with ten square feet of ground, which we tilled, presenting the horticultural results of our labours to our favourite masters or to those with whom we desired to curry favour.

Due to our lack of means in procuring seeds or rose bushes, we twins shared a garden. I desired a colour scheme, my brother the more solid results of mass production, and in the summer of our first school year this led to the most violent scene in which my brother broke a flower-pot over my head, and I retaliated by putting my fist through both glasses of the spectacles which, owing to astigmatism, he had been forced to wear.

On the 9th February, 1897, my brother and I were summoned during the early afternoon to the head master's study, and were acquainted with the fact that my father had passed away.

The influence of a father of high principles and lofty motives upon any boy between the ages of twelve and twenty, if he is in his father's confidence, may largely shape and mould the child's character. I have little doubt that had my father lived he would have guided me from many sins of omission and commission. He was a most lovable personality, adored by his family and highly respected in the City. He was a fine musician, both as a singer and as a pianist, possessing a sympathetic touch. A gay personality, but meticulously careful in his habits, a quality which displayed itself in his calligraphy, of which he left copious diaries.

No man better understood the art of the right use of leisure. He would fly from the irritations and anxieties of the great banking house in the City, and would spend his week-ends among those then unspoilt vales, downs, and valleys of Surrey, putting up at the "Black Swan" at Gomshall or hide beside Pitch Hill at the "Green Man," charming little inns then untouched by the Sunday motoring public. And he collected Chippendale furniture, spent his evenings with a glee club, one of the most distinguished in London; and during his August holiday, with my mother, would fly to the Alps.

Before his marriage he had been one of the pioneers and first

members of the Alpine Club. He made a virgin ascent of the Aiguille des Petits Charmoz and traversed the Giglistocke without guides; and long before the Swiss Alpine Club had provided shelters and facilities for climbers, he had ascended the Ortler, the Aiguille d'Argentière, the Finsteraarhorn, a most arduous peak; and, following Whymper's conquest, was one of the first thereafter in 1879 to scale the Matterhorn. In the guest books of some of the oldest and most remote inns, in later years, I have traced the record of some of his climbs, which are accompanied always by witty observations. And except for first-class ascents he never employed porters or the more experienced men who were just forming themselves into a corps of qualified guides. He used to make great hops from one valley to another, alone, journeys in which the modern climber almost invariably employs a guide.

From Lauterbrunnen he tracked as the crow flies to Ried in the Loetschental, traversing the high and difficult Tsingel and Telli Glaciers. From Zermatt he traversed beneath the towering Dent Blanche, and then over miles of glacier and snowfields down to Arolla; and again from this Mecca of mountaineers over the precipitous pass of the Col de Collon at eleven thousand feet, down to the wild and rugged valley of the Valtournanche. In my own far lesser mountaineering experience I have always felt the thrill of lone mountaineering or accompanied by one friend, as opposed to the more elaborate excursions which I have made accompanied by guides, ropes, and the insurance policies of climbers.

In an age when the clamour of the market-place already had begun to call ever more loudly to those engaged in the leadership of industry and commerce, this flight to the Alps undoubtedly contributed to my father's mind that gaiety and purity which later exemplified itself in his devotion to music and to the Church. The rewards of mountaineering are the richest, of the finest quality, offered by a civilized world. The stimulation to the mind and spirit of attaining to heights sublime, through tempest and difficulty, is unmatched. The emotions experienced during a struggle with the elements, with sometimes a thousand feet of sheer space between the physical body and eternity, moving foot by foot up the rocky face of some defiant Colossus, or crossing stealthily across mountains of jagged ice, remain rich in the memory.

These are the feelings which give renewed zest to the weary soul, fresh impetus to ambition, a strengthening of the whole

moral fibre. Nor is the reward alone of the spirit : the whole physical being responds to the strident, triumphant appeal to the emotion. The moment of conquest is intoxicating to the mind. Every muscle, every fibre, every nerve is braced for the effort. Man becomes tempered like wrought steel, supple as a rapier blade. He is matched against grim Nature in all her rugged majesty, buffeted by tempests, tortured by thirst, famished by hunger, subjected to extremes of heat and frost ; and not least is he matched himself—all his weakness and cowardice, his disappointments and failings during the long hours of silent struggle are mirrored before the mind, and, as he triumphs, so he realizes his power.

I know of no other way by which age can be thrust into the background and the drooping spirit be raised to a fresh consciousness of its dominant creative mission.

I have often been told that my father overtaxed the resources of his nervous energy ; and that had he discarded mountaineering he might have lived well past the age of fifty-three at which he died. But life being what it is, and the human span, offering no attractions for the philosophic comparable with those of the uncharted seas of Cosmos, I am more than convinced that he was satisfied, like those tens of thousands of others who nearly twenty years later perished in high adventure.

Attired in Eton suits and top hats we attended the funeral in the Hampstead cemetery, and then returned to school.

This miserable, skinny creature did not seem to prosper at the school in Hampstead, and while his twin brother remained there, he was sent to join his elder brother at the school in Walmer.

I remember St. Clare with peculiar joy. It was a great rambling creeper-clad house with some thirty acres of gardens and playing fields, set on the chalk downs just behind Walmer Castle. The sight of the sea, placid and blue in the summer months, with stately ships, and lashed to great fury in the winter, as the breakers rolled over the Goodwin Sands, made an instant appeal to the spirit of adventure and romance latent in my nature. The squat castle of Walmer itself enthralled me and the long walks over the downs towards St. Margaret's, or among the fishing boats on the Deal beach, in the centre of which stood the lifeboat house, were filled with wild excitement. The change in scene, more appealing to my mentality, as much as the sea air itself, immediately impressed itself, both on my mind and on my physical being. I filled out rapidly, and being tall for my

years, became at the age of ten, a nimble footballer, a good gymnast, and a member of the first football, cricket, and hockey elevens.

From the height of the wind-swept downs between Kingsdown and St. Margaret's, where often on Sundays we went walking, I would look over the blue-green waters of the English Channel.

This white-chalk edge of England made a deep impress on my imagination. Here, England girt by the seas; there, beyond the limitless expanse of ocean, the highways to the outposts of Empire, great ships ploughing their way carrying all adventure to the encampments and tents of those who dwelt among the snowy vastnesses of the Indian hills, or on the burning plains of Africa.

And there were farmers, red and round of face, bow-legged, with heavy shoulders, and possessed of thick, stubby moustaches which drooped at the corners; and fishermen and labourers, mostly of a type, square-headed, sandy-haired, watery-blue-eyed, stocky of build and thick-legged, with slow, drawling speech, and their smell was of the soil and of the seaweed and of sweat: and it was good. A perfume of the countryside, of the barton and of felled timber, dried bracken, beech leaves, and the faint essence of the salt of the sea, whose moisture in thick mists sometimes encompassed the landscape, was mingled with that of muscular, wide-pored humanity. I loved this goodly smell, preferring it to that of soap-suds which rose from the church pews on warm Sunday mornings, even as a shepherd may whiff the essential odour of his flock upon the moorland breeze, but will find the pungent smell of sheep-dip intolerable to the nasal sensitiveness.

And sometimes I lay in the grass on the cliff edge, the smell of earth and of sea in my nostrils, a warm sun kissing my young limbs, and the huge world supporting my little body, and with this great scape of billowing sea and rugged cliff laid out before me, I built castles on the far horizon, explored and waged wars, climbed among the mountain peaks of cloudland, lost myself in the enchanted, golden palaces of the sun.

The days slipped by unnoticed; but in this beautiful countryside beside the sea, under whose spell every British boy should be cast, I discovered the stern God of my mentors to be one also of infinite tenderness.

The privileged families of England, those who possess the means or who by frugality determine that their children shall

receive an education separate from, or possibly better than, that provided by the State, have always the choice of locality in such schools. Their number seems to be legion, and they vary vastly in character and in management. At least for boys, deprived of the influence of a father, whether through death or due to his goings and comings being mostly beyond the seas, I do not think it can be contested that their inclusion in a boarding school is wholly for the best. For those who both biologically and by virtue of parental position and responsibility there is destined a place of leadership among their fellows, the self-contained community life, as boarders, during the most impressionable years of life, is a factor of tremendous significance in the building of the qualities of self-reliance and in developing initiative and resource.

Critics, to be found mostly among those who play a part in the State educational system, in their hostility to these schools, attach far too much importance to two matters, which within my experience are practically of negligible interest to the definition of character. Firstly they direct their criticism to the criticism, which certainly is produced within these semi-monastic seminaries. This, of course, by all accounts, providing also a theme for the school fiction of the age, is not contested. But it may be remarked that students of the mind are familiar with the fact that every boy is a hero-worshipper, nor, as is obvious, do these aberrations have any permanency in after life. The second point of criticism, and one which has more weight, is that the class of teacher recruited to these privately owned, fee-paying schools is inferior to the standard of the pedant employed by the State. That is often true. The objectives of State education, however, with those rarer exceptions defined by the personality of the head master, are wholly educational, while those of the private schools, often weak in definitive educational value, are the building and moulding of individual character.

When the choice is, therefore, between a school overlooking the seas which girdle these islands, and one within a city or town, or perhaps set in a mansion somewhere in the heart of the countryside, since the selection is so various and wide, it passes my comprehension that any parent, possessed of both imagination and pride of race, does not send his child to one of those beside the sea.

For, without the sea, England is nothing. Without the sea, the character and mould of Englishmen would be of a different pattern. Without the sea, the history, traditions, and culture of

British people would be as polyglot and various as those of the people who go to make up the states of Europe and the nation of America.

At the age of youth, when first is revealed the explorations of Raleigh, Drake, and Captain Cook, which have stamped British culture and institutions on the face of the world, children should both see and sense those horizonless oceans across which their history has been written, the geography of their inheritance made, and the influence of whose far lands flows in their life-blood and is in their very bones.

The school at Walmer, hugging the white-chalk cliffs, with its fishermen, coastguards, sailors and Royal Marines, produced in myself a love of my country and of its people, perhaps the most durable quality in my character.

And if it were necessary to illustrate the daily fight of life, then there was always within my vision the storm-swept Goodwin Sands, the sirens of the lightships piercing the impenetrable darkness of fog by night, and dozens of rugged fishermen, English to the core, ready to don life-belts and sou'westers and fight the battle of the sea, the work of rescue, in the lifeboats of Deal, of Walmer, and of Kingsdown.

And all the while, in tempest or upon waters of glass, in the holds in vast liners riding the oceans, or piled high on the decks of insignificant tramps chugging in the trough of the Channel, was being carried beneath my eyes the merchandise and produce of British factories and the unvarying justice of British cultural method, to the uttermost ends of the earth.

No picture, no illustration could have created an impression so durable, or one which in every breath of the breeze and in every wave crest said to me, "Go and do likewise."

St. Clare, originally founded at Manor House, Hastings, was, I believe, the first private school in England. The head master, Mr. Alexander Murray, was a grey-haired Scot of wee free predilections. A narrow lane between high brick walls separated the school from a convent; and we never ceased to be told of the iniquity of the Catholics. As our minds grew in knowledge, so we imagined all the horrors of the Inquisition taking place on the other side of the wall.

Mr. and Mrs. Murray between them maintained the governorship of the school, consisting of between thirty and forty boarders, many of whom were the younger sons of well-known Scottish families. But behind the proprietors loomed always the saintly

figure of Miss Charlotte Murray, who used to lecture us on the Bible and to fill us with a passion for her own particular poetical works. I suppose that in the selection of Christmas cards, not only as a duty, but from the very sentiment itself, year after year, we were used to choose those which carried the godly verses of Miss Charlotte. But although the Murrays loathed the Inquisition on the other side of the wall, in the conduct of the school itself they were capable of utilizing all its methods.

I remember that when some stamps had disappeared from a boy's album, and the little purloiner could not be found, we were all summoned to the chapel. Miss Charlotte, in sole charge of the proceedings, delivered an impassioned speech which made the flames of hell dance before our childish eyes ; and when we had all been frightened almost out of our senses, she ordered that each one of the boys, one after the other, should stand up before her, in the presence of God, who was in fact, as she said, in the chapel, and declare : " Miss Charlotte, I did not do it ! "

One boy, Wardlaw-Ramsay, who served afterwards with gallantry with the 93rd, was so shaken that he affirmed : " Miss Charlotte, I *did* do it ! " and had the greatest difficulty in convincing Miss Charlotte, if not God, afterwards, that he was not the guilty party. The little thief, in fact, was never found, and one can only imagine that his, like our, terror of God and Miss Charlotte was even greater than the foretaste of hell's flames, which she had conjured before our imaginations.

But the school was most admirably conducted both educationally and physically. A most lovable Sergeant of the Royal Marines used to visit the school and drill us. Even the punishment, extra drill, for whose doubtful privilege those convicted had to supply the Sergeant with 2s. 6d. apiece, was a pleasure. The Sergeant inspired me with military zeal ; and the seal was set on this when Lord Roberts visited the school immediately following the South African War. This was at the time of the Roberts-Buller controversy.

Public opinion was such, as it often is to-day, that this great soldier, the victor of Kandahar, who made the strategic Khyber Pass safe for all time, and who in the last years of his life forewarned this country against the Great War, was in high popular disfavour and even had been hissed by the crowd just prior to his visit to the school. We all shook hands with him at Walmer station, and the cheer which we gave him as the train left must have fully compensated for the ignorant booing of the crowd.

During this period, especially since the fathers of two of my friends were in the fighting, Colonel Granville Smith of the Grenadier Guards, and Major Eager of the Lincolnshires, I followed the South African War with breathless interest. I bombarded my cousin, Captain Jimmy Waterlow of the C.I.V., with correspondence, prayers, and presents; and when he had a moment he used to send me postcards from the veldt. Writing from Pretoria on the 23rd August, 1900, he said: "We see from time to time, mostly in the City Press, wonderful tales of the doings of our men. Two stories of men in my company have recently come to my notice, one of a fellow swimming a river and saving some lives, another of a fellow getting water for wounded men under a heavy fire. All these tales are *lies* from beginning to end, and should be received with great caution by the public."

I remember how disillusioned I was, with my book of news cuttings and pictures before me, when I read these lines. But they were an excellent forewarning for my own experience during the Great War, when I read what our "gallant troops" were doing, and how wholly quiet it was on the Western Front.

The head master himself was deeply interested both in geography and in science. The lessons in geography were conducted always by himself with the aid of what was then known as a "magic lantern," and perhaps he was the first teacher in the country to make use of the projector. These lessons, illustrated by lantern slides, were extraordinarily fascinating to the boyish mind.

On Saturday evenings we used to be given lectures. Sometimes these were of a light character: Alfred Capper came down and contributed a thought-reading séance. I am quite sure that if the Murrays had known the sense of his performance beforehand, they would have been horrified. And there was a lecture on *Punch*; but many of these lectures were contributed by Mr. Murray himself. He possessed a large laboratory in which he experimented. During the year 1902 he projected electrical waves across the long length of the play-room which rang bells at the other end, without the aid of communicating wires. This was my first introduction to wireless, and I suppose that there were scarcely a hundred people throughout the world who possessed any expert knowledge of the subject, or who knew indeed that even then we were on the eve of an entirely new era in sound projection.

I so much enjoyed my years at Walmer that I am sure I could fill a whole volume with reminiscences. No boys were ever better fed or by a better system. There was a variety of at least three dishes each day and the dining-room was divided into four tables, each one of which daily had the privilege of first choice in selection. "Rissoles, potatoes, and rice" was very popular, and they were giant rissoles, as large as cricket balls, swimming in thick brown sauce. There was a hot molten chocolate dish which rarely went beyond the first table : and in all my life I have never seen or tasted such marvellous Yorkshire pudding as was produced from the kitchens of St. Clare.

If we were very good during the week, we used to be asked, two or three of us, to supper with Mr. Murray on Sunday evening. I was only very good once and it was a terrifying experience, because I could not escape from the thought that God was hovering over the table in the presence of the penetrating clear blue eyes of Miss Charlotte, enormously magnified behind her glasses.

The head master always secured the very best assistants. There was a Mr. Harvey, young and extraordinarily handsome, who played cricket divinely, whom I worshipped ; and there was Mr. Druitt, with carrotty hair, who seemed to wear eternally a pea-green shirt, rolled up at the sleeves, and exposing marvellously freckled arms. But Mr. Druitt knew more about gardening and caterpillars, moths and chrysalises than any man I have ever met and he possessed, moreover, that rare mind which can make mathematics interesting.

I alternated my worship between the beautiful figure of Harvey and the absorbing interest of Druitt. And there was Mr. Bernard, an expert in all games and a most charming personality, who after a period in Canada and as a soldier during the War has returned to the school, over whose destiny he still presides as head master. He does not seem to have changed in personal appearance or in agility, from the days in which I first met him on the football field.

While at St. Clare, I produced, edited, and illustrated a monthly magazine, *The Magpie*, which continued for two years. It is still, I think, a very creditable performance, although, as I note from some of the full-page illustrations, when my sense of draughtsmanship was not sufficiently skilled to produce horses' legs in action, I whirled ink about the paper to represent a cloud of dust ; while in the case of an engine travelling at high

speed, clouds of smoke and steam effectively covered the difficulty of perspective in drawing the rolling stock which followed the engine.

I have never decided to my satisfaction why it was that Mr. Murray so often decided, and with such ceremony, to beat little boys. He was well over sixty years of age, æsthetic, almost priestly in appearance, himself a scientist of note, a man of profound religious convictions, who participated in no kind of athletic amusement, and in appearance and habit was quite unlike any other preparatory schoolmaster whom I have ever seen.

Each Monday morning after the soul's purification in three doses of attendance at chapel and church, learning by heart the collect for the week, and spending the rest of the Sabbath in a display of artistic talent by the decoration of texts, the school was gathered at its desks in the large schoolroom. Flanked by Miss Charlotte on one side to contribute celestial authority, and by the Marine sergeant on the other as evidence of force, Mr. Murray read out the list of bad-conduct marks. A total absence of these was awarded by the honour of supping with Mr. Murray on Wednesday evening : thirty of such marks was the insignia of a beating, twenty for an extra drill on Saturday afternoon.

We were kept in horrible suspense, for each master kept a private book of such marks and they were contributed to Mr. Murray on Saturday, when he made their addition. With what sorrow he must have observed the faces of little boys upturned towards him, as with words of wisdom he cleansed their hearts and then blessed their bowed heads, hugging the thought that on the morrow his right hand would swing the cane in order to extract egregiousness from the physical person, and to aid God, who by Sunday evening, after the third assault, must have succeeded in routing the devils in the soul.

So, after the reading of the marks was finished, Murray with hanging head would cross the playroom and go upstairs to his study, followed by the first terrified delinquent. We listened with ears pricked, and awe in our hearts, to the thudding of the cane, counting the strokes, while the keepers of the soul and of the body, represented respectively in Miss Charlotte and the sergeant, stood with wagging heads. The first criminal would return to sit delicately on his seat, and the next, whom we could observe through the glass door leading to the playroom, would cross it arranging his shirt tail as best he might as some kind of

protection, so that when he reappeared before his comrades he might in his step be able to adopt some kind of sprightly attitude.

Human nature being frail, I have often wondered whether the masters did not sometimes privily meet together and tot'up an extra mark or two before the submission of their lists to the head master, in order to ensure that some ill-favoured person would receive a sound thrashing.

I survived a beating, but on the average during most Saturday afternoons spent my time, and enjoyed it, at drill under the Marine sergeant. One might venture the opinion that this insistence of drill at the most impressionable age of youth made of me "a footslogger" and that it took me twenty-five years to escape from the impression. But I cannot believe that either my brother or myself were nearly so naughty as a great many others who often supped with Mr. Murray.

CHAPTER III

OUT OF THE MOULD. A SEMI-MONASTIC SEMINARY

Seaview and Hampstead—Nearly killed by a carriage—Importance of physical training—Bradfield—Education for the profession of arms—Generalship—Dr. H. B. Gray—Greek Play—An English public school.

AT the age of twelve, due to causes which might have invited the curiosity and investigation of the medical profession, or perhaps owing to the invigoration produced by bathing on the Walmer beaches, I had so far advanced along the road to manhood that it was decided, I do not know by whom, to remove me from St. Clare and re-unite me with my twin brother at the school in Hampstead.

Whether it was our interest in, and the rare peeps which we secured from the vantage point of the windows of the reading-room in the second story of the school building, of nuns, over the brick wall, I do not know, but certainly, chiefly under the tuition of a boy whose uncle was a power in the theatre world, there was very little concerning the obscure mysteries of sex to which we needed any introduction. But it was just that little which made all the difference. I am perfectly sure that neither the head master nor his assistants had the remotest idea that our curiosity and speculation had penetrated so far up these avenues, before which the grim Miss Charlotte stood almost with a flaming sword.

My elder brother's career was already destined for the Royal Navy ; and before I left St. Clare, he had proceeded to Bradfield College to join the then famous Navy Class in preparation for the *Britannia*, while the influence of Lord Goschen, who had largely governed my father's activities in the firm of Frühling and Goschen, was invoked to secure him a nomination.

In 1903 I returned to Heddon Court. Our holidays, meanwhile, had been spent in cycling giddily down the gravel path from Hampstead Heath to the Vale of Health, and, in the summer,

mostly at Seaview in the Isle of Wight. This now most popular resort consisted of a few fishermen's cottages and a row of hideous three-storied and grey-fronted houses behind the switchback pier.

One of these houses belonged to my grandfather and another to my Uncle Alce, and the row has since been converted into the well-known Pier Hotel. But my grandfather Waterlow seems to have possessed a very fine sense in real estate, for he had also houses on the Brighton sea front and in Reigate, some of which have come under the hammer since the War, and have realized boom prices.

While playing hide-and-seek on the sea front one summer day I ran full tilt into a carriage drawn by two horses. I was knocked down, and descended somewhere between their legs. Then both the fore and hind wheels on the near side of the carriage, in which were seated a gentleman and his wife, rotated over the centre of my prostrate body. Quite a number of persons witnessed the accident. An old lady declared that she had seen angels lifting the wheels. I was carried to the apartments which we occupied; but no ill befell me except that the imprint of an undervest remained on my skin for several weeks. The Press, at the time, remarked the details of this accident as a modern miracle. The Sunday following the accident public thanks was given in the church for my delivery. As the wheels cut right across my stomach, and the carriage with its occupants was no mean weight, it still passes my comprehension how it was that I was not killed or at least very gravely injured.

The woods between the Pier and Seagrove Bay were closely preserved and only the narrowest of paths connected the Bay with the village. We were one of five or six families who year after year used to go to this charming seaside resort on the Solent, and the remainder of the families were united with my own through marriage or through business: the Uziclies of Lloyds; the Hyslops; the Makowskis, sons of my "Uncle Stush" who married a remote Waterlow aunt; the Coles; the Hays; the Maudslays; and these attracted to this summer holiday resort other families, especially from Reigate and Hampstead.

We expended our time in boating, bathing, and in furious cricket and hockey matches on the sands. It had been at St. Clare that an old boy took an interest in me, and he used to follow us to Seaview and take me out in a sailing-boat upon the

most wild excursions. For several years he was not only my hero and leader, but principal instructor in the lighter amusements of society. The final separation came some years later when he presented me with a motor bicycle.

The bike was probably efficient, but at the age of fifteen I became a perfect pestilence to my parent and to everyone else with whom I came in contact. I understood nothing of lubrication or ignition, and used to accumulate the most ghastly shocks through short circuits from the tank to my legs ; and once, as the light was failing on a tour into Hertfordshire, I successfully lighted my way upon the road from the glow of the single cylinder, red-hot through failure of the complicated lubricating lamp.

In the final excursion, before my mother with fixed determination terminated this friendship, I dragged her at high speed, and often on one wheel, to the East Coast at Southwold, in a trailer made of basket-work, culminating the journey in a sand-dune. Both the bike and trailer were despatched back, since I had no funds, to my generous friend ; and I believe that he received a parental note instructing him to determine the Platonic friendship.

My return to Heddon Court was welcomed greatly by Mr. Stallard. I enjoyed two further years at his school and look back upon them with unmixed pleasure. From my tutors, especially Summers and Harrison, I learned a great deal and became interested in many things.

A woman, with an immense wart on her chin, instructed the school in art. She filled me with enthusiasm for her subject, and guided me in the first achievements of painting. Had I followed the subject professionally, I think, with some pride and with a great deal of gratitude, that I might have considerably succeeded. In any case she established for me one of the most absorbing hobbies of a lifetime.

But Stallard's School had grown enormously, both in numbers and in prestige. We possessed a beautiful cricket and football ground, rented from Lord Mansfield, and the excursions to this, on "brakes" behind the goodly smell of horses, were an exciting prelude and aftermath to the matches which ensued.

I was a fierce footballer ; and as full back the mainstay of a side which among private schools was considered second to none around London, perhaps throughout the country. But I was far too temperamental for cricket, although a bowler of both

violence and speed, which secured the result in most matches that I was able to terrify my opponents and then by the occasional straight ball which I succeeded in bowling, in devastating the wicket.

We attended gym at the Hampstead Public Baths under the instruction of a man who is still my friend, ex-Sergeant-Major Biggs. He had all the appearance of a sergeant-major, and not only in gymnastics but in the combined exercises and mazes which he devised for display as well as in boxing instruction, gave me the greatest encouragement, and during the summer the school, sometimes as many as a hundred in the water at a time, used to go to the swimming baths.

During these years, I formed one very close friendship with a boy two or three years my junior, whose every activity I fostered, and who has remained throughout my life as the perfect pattern of an Englishman. In every activity in which we were engaged together we were successful, but apart from each other, although almost inseparable, neither one nor the other felt at ease or was entirely happy.

In the most important cricket match of the season against Orley Farm School, we put up an undefeatable partnership for hours, slogging the bowling all over the field to the immense delight of our parents and of both Mr. Stallard and Mr. Summers, who fostered a friendship which was certain to produce such successful results in unison. This boy, Ivan Whitehorn, to-day is certainly not the least creditable officer of the British Navy. He has gained great distinction in China since the War by feats of conspicuous gallantry in rare adventure. Our ways separated, but for Ivan I have always preserved the glowing joy of a youthful affection.

I was so much in love with the atmosphere of Heddon Court that even when as the result of a trivial practical joke, my prefecture was taken away, I did not lose heart. On the contrary, the admonition of the head master, who said, "I am not angry, I am not annoyed—I am only disappointed to a certain degree," did not deter me in my affection or duty, and I aspired again to the prefecture, which Mr. Stallard soon very generously again conferred upon me.

Hampstead had already begun to extend its dimensions; and it was notable also for the influx of the Jews. Names which in my earlier period at the school had been unknown throughout its roll-call, now became ever present—Cohen, Samuels, Myers,

Schwab, Benvenisti, and others contracted to the resonance of good English, like Byng, from one of lengthy German origin, and others changed completely, so that only the tight black curls on the head and the prominent noses denoted Semitic origin. But these Cohens and the like, under the tutelage of Stallard, became good sportsmen, I think much more so than that greater number of boys of their race whom one met in competition in the games against the other and newer private schools which had grown like mushrooms in the neighbourhood, and whose pupils were increasingly boys of Jewish stock.

Stallard was a great historian ; and as Murray had implanted in my mind all the wonder and revelation of a world geography, so Stallard encouraged an interest in the races, septs, and clans, in their values and national characteristics. And the impulse contributed to a desire for physical perfection by the Marine sergeant of Deal, was enormously enhanced by the muscular and lithe giant ex-cavalry man who punched me vigorously on the nose until my eyes poured with water, in order to stir my pugnacity and test my powers of resistance. I never succeeded in making any impression upon Sergeant-Major Biggs, but as Mr. Stallard was himself a boxer and possessed a prominent proboscis of the Wellingtonian type, I reserved my strength and skill to brave the defences of the head master and to deliver an onslaught upon his nose, which I succeeded in making bleed more than once.

But I was remarkable, between the ages of thirteen and fourteen, for my size and strength, already having reached five feet ten inches in height and weighing over nine stone. My twin brother was almost of equal size and weight and at the annual gymnastic display preceding the Christmas holidays, we used to be exhibited to the other parents like prize live-stock.

But there were other boys produced by the school in my generation of almost equal proportions, while the roll of scholarships to Rugby, Marlborough, Charterhouse, Wellington, Winchester, Westminster, and other first-class public schools, demonstrated that in no way was education neglected. And these facts are some testimony to the sun's penetrative powers in high Hampstead, and to the consequent gifts of ultra-violet rays, while lower London wallows in a mire of carbon fog.

When it rained on half-holidays, the school used to be gathered in the classrooms and the heavy wooden screens separating them rolled back, while an institution known as "penny readings" delivered itself of songs and recitations. A Scot, by name

MacGregor, a great wag, with whom I was closely allied in friendship, grossly insulted the audience one afternoon* by the rendering of an anti-Sassenach song. Something approaching pandemonium was raised, and the Scots found themselves at the close of the entertainment cornered in one of the classrooms. I remember that together with MacGregor and the two sons of Bonar Law I fought one of the battles of my life against outraged Englishmen whose feelings had been so jarred at the expense of one-twelfth of a bawbee. It was a cheap get-back for Scotsmen. We revelled not only in the jests themselves, but in the fight which ensued, for we had behind us lockers in which were a whole battery of cricket stumps, pads, and bats as missiles and weapons and the security of a narrow front, while the heads of our enemies were legion and dispelled over a wide area of the classroom floor. It was a glorious battle in which I lost a tooth, a first one, which should have disappeared earlier in any case, so that I only suffered from the loss of my mother's sixpence, which was always contributed when a first tooth was extracted. And I was soundly beaten by the head master, who sprawled me over an arm-chair for the purpose and beat me as was his habit with a cricket bat, cut to a length of about six inches. It hurt me horribly, much more so than any cane, while the noise produced by its flat surface was such that it was impossible to insert wads of paper or exercise books, to ward off the first sharpness of its sting.

Mr. Stallard smoked a tobacco of most pleasing aroma, and I can close my eyes to-day and have a most vivid recollection of his study, seen, if I can properly mix the metaphor, through the smell of his tobacco smoke, with photographs of his old boys on the mantelpiece, and I can vividly repicture those battings wherein the victim spread himself over the back of the deep green velvet arm-chair of a head master's study, and thus uplifted, at least physically, waved arms and legs in windmill fashion while the bat descended with precision upon the centre poise of the back of his anatomy. And at night, Mr. Stallard would visit the dormitories attired in his dinner jacket, smoking a cigar of equally pleasant and memorable aroma, which had the effect, subconsciously, encouraged also by his words, of producing a very homely atmosphere in the minds of his boarders.

My elder brother had already passed from the Navy Class at Bradfield to the *Britannia*, where as a gymnast, he carried all before him; and both my twin brother and I were destined for

the same school. We sat, closely supervised, whilst steam rose in clouds from the tarred playground on a very hot summer afternoon, answering the entrance examination papers, and duly qualified for admission to the college.

During this final year, the school sports were held on the famous L.A.C. track at Stamford Bridge, with Mr. Montague Sherman, the famous member of the Bar and Bench, and equally famous athlete, as judge. I established a still unbroken record for the school at the age of fourteen and three months, completing the quarter-mile in fifty-nine and one-fifth seconds.

I easily won the 600 yards handicap race from scratch, the 250 yards handicap race also from scratch, and the long jump. In the high jump, which by my previous performances I could quite easily also have won, I deliberately failed, in order that the prize could be won by that friend with whom I co-operated in everything. The head master detected the deliberation of my failure, and I think this was one of the rare occasions upon which I had received words of approbation for an act of self-sacrifice.

In the same year I won the challenge cup for the best athlete of the year. Again, I think it not ungenerous to record that my success was in large measure due to the encouragement of the Sergeant of Marines and the ex-Sergeant-Major of cavalry.

Bradfield College was at that time under the joint Head-mastership and Wardenship of the Rev. Herbert Branstons Gray, without doubt one of the first authorities in the Empire on education, and one of the most famous head masters of his age.

With my twin brother, I spent the first term in the School House, a period of education during which I learned Gray's *Elegy* from a master who loved to intone its sentiment from the dais of Big School; but I signally failed to establish any interest in Greek. The fact that one of the houses at Bradfield was named Army House, that its members were all destined for the military colleges and were also the chief objects of wonder and admiration in the playing fields, apart from any other influences, determined me upon a military career; and the next term I joined the Army House, and was under the supervision of a man almost as famous as Gray himself, one Andrew Low, a dour and eccentric Scot.

The transference had the advantage, also, of removing me during most impressionable and critical years from too close proximity to my twin brother whose attitude to life, and interests, ran in completely divergent directions from my own. I am

quite certain that if we had remained together, the flower-pot incident would have been repeated many times, and I am convinced also that generally it is a fundamental error to send brothers of approximately the same age, to the same school.

I cannot say that the education purveyed by the preceptors of Bradfield College was of any high value to a youth like myself. The curriculum required for the Army Entrance Examinations perhaps contributed to this. I possessed an early fanaticism for English composition and literature, but my instruction in these subjects was limited to one hour during the week, an omission which may account for the fact that few soldiers can express themselves on paper, and that Army orders frequently defeat their own meaning and are unintelligible in their logic. My education in the art of writing perhaps fitted me gloomily to observe in a regimental order that "Acting Lance-Corporal, unpaid, John Smith, is reduced to the ranks for drunkenness. Fined fourteen days' pay." Thus far, but no farther.

In later life I have discovered that I have a considerable bent for scientific research and for the mysteries of chemistry. But science was taught by a man with a Harry Tate moustache who did not understand that he might have inspired us with the supreme facts of the universe; and we juggled with mirrors and prisms in a bare room, measuring the angles of convexity. Even to-day I hesitate when seeing a lens in deciding whether it should be termed concave or convex. "Stinks" was taught by a tired man, who instead of attempting to awaken our interest in chemistry through all the wonders of Nature, filled our minds with meaningless formulæ, so that at the end I still only remember that H_2O is a hieroglyphic for water, and H_2SO_4 plus something else with whose bottle I was familiar makes a hell of an explosion. But I wasn't allowed to know that, though I could always find the bottle.

In history and geography alone was I taught anything; but in these subjects "the Dunks," Richardson, a famous Cambridge cricketer and master draughtsman, made the subjects wildly exciting by urging his pupils to illustrate their maps by towns and villages of correct architecture, to fill the waste spaces with wild game, and in perspective to show the mountains, harbours, and rivers of the world. I only once overstepped the mark when I filled the Sahara Desert with top-hatted missionaries, bibles and umbrellas in their hands, flying before little black creatures, naked and unashamed, with waving assegais prancing in their wake.

And "the Mole," now second master at the College, made history live before my eyes. Not satisfied with the textbooks of Green and Oman, he conjured to our imagination the horrors of the Bastille, and I could picture Danton, Robespierre, Marat, hatching plots and hurrying the gilded aristocracy to the guillotine with all the imagery of an adventurous fancy. He read us long passages from Rosebery's *Last Phase*, a masterpiece of description in the English language ; so that if in later years it was my profession to study the strategy and tactics of Napoleon at Marengo and at Waterloo, I could conjure again from my mind a most vivid impression of the great soldier's personality, acquired from the teaching of "the Mole." I knew Napoleon better than I know most of our contemporary Prime Ministers, and certainly I knew him far better than I knew Lord Haig.

It may be observed, therefore, that though I might have been interested in things had the system of teaching been better, the only matters which aroused my eagerness were concerned with persons, statesmen, and generals, tribal customs, the influences which mould the character of races and of nations, the strains and stresses which provoke revolutions and wars. But these palatable dishes were served to me rarely ; and in their place I was persistently bombarded with lessons in algebra, trigonometry, physics, which during the hours of their procedure dulled my senses to coma or drove me to wild distraction.

For me there was never any sense in algebraic formulæ, or in the working out of a problem by this method, which I could perfectly well solve by common sense. I loathed the mental excursions for trains competing against each other for arrival at a destination, and I detested the permutations and combinations of people who acquired oranges and sold them by the gross with long terms of credit, inflicting on me the necessity of working out the compound interest due to the vendor. As for mathematics, the master so detested the interior of my mind, preferring a dirty, unwashed boy with long black tousled hair who had a perfect genius for solving ridiculous commercial problems, that almost as soon as I got inside the classroom, he found a convenient excuse for sending me to waste the hour standing in a passage, for which God be thanked. But I was being educated for military service.

And, after all, generalship is concerned essentially with the understanding of individual character ; and the successful general must be possessed of the equipment of judgment enabling

him to divine upon the facts before him the probable moves of his enemy. Algebra, solid geometry, physics, cannot help him in this task, but a knowledge of history and of geography contribute the essentials without which his judgment must be faulty. And in leadership of men, the only knowledge which can be of any service is that of men themselves, their habits, customs, griefs, and grievances, taboos, hopes, fears, and not least their ideals and capacity for inspiration.

But education for the business of soldiering, though perhaps it may have had some justification for technical branches, was fantastic as applied to men who a few years later, by sole virtue of their professional standing, would be called upon to lead in the field the largest army the world has ever known.

Of art I was taught positively nothing. It was not included in the school curriculum; and though my capacity, under proper tutelage, might have excelled, my love for it was left to find expression in making caricatures of my masters and in decorating blotting-paper while I was pretending to solve the riddles of algebra.

Youth must find self-expression; and what I suffered was the doom also of a high percentage of those who filled the classrooms and dormitories of Bradfield College. There was only one way out from this semi-monastic seminary; and the very neglect of any cultural development among its inmates, impelled them towards it. Apart from football, cricket, and the fives courts, to which were admitted only the "bloods," our minds, both individually and as a whole, were employed in a persistent pursuit of tonics with which to supply the emotional side of our being.

There was seldom harm in sentimental friendships, and most often an inspiration to the younger and a chastening of the elder resulted from them. I can cast the eye of memory back with very tender memories to those days of such friendships, one or two of which are well preserved, so that with years the disparity of age has disappeared, and I can refresh myself with an innocent joy: so, perfectly acquitting the failures of school and curriculum.

It is really most illuminating as a study of the schoolmasters' mind of that time, if not also of the present, to read the reports made upon an enterprising, athletic, well-developed, and not wholly stupid boy of fourteen years of age, myself.

Dr. Gray, after my first term at Bradfield College, as a Christmas present for both myself and my mother, wrote: "He requires coercion. He has force (hence the coercion I suppose),

the future will show whether he can train the force to good account; at present he is untrained"; and my house-master said: "For a New Boy he is too independent and self-assertive." That was the great idea: at all costs of individual character and possible genius let us cast the boys into a mincing-machine and bring them out the other end as public-school pulp. And how complimentary to the Murrays, to Stallard, and to my mother! I am glad to think that I continued during a tempestuous career to be so "self-assertive" and so hardly adaptable to "coercion" that by Christmas 1907, both I and my mother received a final Christmas present, my house-master reporting that I was "Guilty of gross defiance of rules Tuesday 17." And on the 17th December, two days before the school broke up for the holidays, I was hurried in a cab down the long road from Bradfield to Theale, with the brand of "having been sacked from a public school." But my mind, although pounded, was not pulp.

While Gray and Low discovered me increasingly annoying, these reports throughout, however, tell that in geography I was "Very neat. An excellent worker. Draws excellent maps"; while in history I was reported "Works excellently. Learns his lessons well. Has done excellently in exams"; and in English essay, although this did not reach the curriculum until I was nearly sixteen, I was found to be "Too fond of fine words of which he does not always understand the meaning," and later "Very good, though his style is oft too journalistic." How "oft" I had such an opportunity, I have already recorded as being during one hour of the week; and I can suppose that my soaring literary ambitions impelled me during that hour to fill an essay with every word acquired to a growing vocabulary from considerable reading.

The school lists show me as being always head of my class in history, geography, and in English composition, and well at the bottom in mathematics, chemistry, and physics.

My closest friend in the Army House was Geoffrey Sichel, the brilliant and promising son of Walter Sichel, the historical biographer. There was no view on any subject under the sun which we did not share in common, and my friend was an astonishingly good mimic and actor. During holidays he would acquire from his father the character and atmosphere of some great historical personage; and during history lessons, when the master's back was turned, Sichel would stand up at his place in class and reproduce a screamingly funny caricature of Napoleon,

Disraeli, or some other historical figure whose wickedness and virtues we were at the time studying. Geoffrey was gazetted to the Middlesex Regiment and we met from time to time, during the War, until at a final meeting by chance in Happy Valley in July 1916, I think we both realized intuitively that we should never meet again. He was killed instantly the same evening. My other great friend, Dodo Cox, the son of a Devonshire parson, captain of cricket, of fives, and in the football eleven, three years my senior, whom I positively worshipped, died as the result of gas poisoning at Bradfield and was buried in its churchyard.

Cazalet, who served with distinction in the War, a fluent Russian scholar and son of a well-known merchant in Moscow, was murdered by the Bolsheviks while serving in liaison with Deniken's troops in 1919.

Kitchener, nephew of the great Field-Marshal, had his legs hopelessly broken, but still lives, pluckily making something of life as a chicken farmer.

Rake, my second closest friend, died in Burma during the War while serving with the Indian Police, and during the War I was stripped of my friends, Courtenay, Dartnell, Peppé, Caulfeild, and Ingpen, three of them the sons of generals; in fact the cream of the Army House of my own generation. One of my younger friends, and between us there existed a great devotion, Benjamin Russell, the son of a well-known Gravesend brewer, survived the War only to pass away from its results soon after the Armistice.

Of them all, Jack Stewart alone remains, as he always was, debonair, hail-fellow-well-met, an eye gone, missing on the Somme, soldier, and one of the first authorities on aircraft in the country; he, with myself, appeared during the years 1922-23 invariably each Saturday on the football field.

While at Bradfield I was under the spell of a recurring religious crisis. The atmosphere of the college chapel, especially upon Sunday evenings in summer-time, aroused intense emotion from the spiritual depths of youth. The warm rays of the sun glowed behind the mosaic of the coloured glass. A sense of close comradeship pervaded the pews in the growing gloom beneath the coloured rays. And the tender tones of Dr. Gray, together with his eloquence, would move the boys profoundly, as I have seen no other preacher infect a congregation with his message. He bound spells upon us, opening shadowy gates to the mists of Divine obscurity, far above the canopy of the skies. And at the end of the service, while eyes were closed behind hands, only the hair

of our heads and backs of our black gowns being visible above the oaken pews, he would pause for several minutes, to me of intoxicating rapture, before administering, almost in a whisper, a blessing. "The Lord bless you and keep you," a pause and his voice rose from its whisper as if to illumine and colour the coming phrases. "The Lord make the light of His countenance to shine upon you." Again a pause, and then a whisper, "And give you peace." I would leave the chapel with a sense of having been shriven, purged, absolved, redeemed. But, too soon, scrambling for supper biscuits, my spirit would be brought back again to a world of reality and to a fresh week of naughtiness.

My house-master, though successful in securing entries to Woolwich and to Sandhurst, and though perhaps, as a stern and irritable disciplinarian, the proper tutor for youths destined for the parade ground, failed to stimulate anything good out of my being. What good, or evil, I did, was of my own volition ; and I possessed a contempt for rules of repression. I was given no authority, and my name was held out perpetually as the contemporary example of wickedness.

I confess that such evil of which I was possessed expressed itself in high spirits, and some genius for invention and improvisation. I laboured tremendously in the making of a master crib. Having cut the whole of the interior from a large dictionary, with the exception of the outside edges of the side leaves, I then possessed a hollow book. Through the centres of the covers, I inserted a stout pin which carried circular cards. On these, in minute handwriting, I laboriously contributed the facts for the day's or week's *viva voce* lesson ; and read them from the hollow space in the front of the book lying before me on the desk, whose back innocently faced Mr. Low. Having an exceptionally good memory, I could, without doubt, easily have learnt the lesson, but the use of so elaborate and deceptive a crib amused me. Forbidden to brew cocoa over the common-room fire, I discovered that by placing a newspaper beneath the door of the furnace-room, I could push the key upon its inside so that it fell upon the paper. Then I drew it underneath the door, which on the school side had no latch, and could open it, giving me access to the furnace, upon which I not only brewed cocoa, but cooked scrambled eggs and other dishes.

Every school is possessed of some attribute, or the productions of some personality for which it is especially famous. Bradfield's chief claim to fame is for the production of a tri-annual Greek

play. The play is surely of greater interest to that section of the public interested in the humanities than to student^t of the College.

Innumerable top-hatted parsons seemed to appear on Greek play days and to fill the amphitheatre. I witnessed the presentation of only one such play, *The Antigone of Sophocles*; and designated by a Greek name, my only function was to wave parsons to stone seats and to present them with the loan of cushions. But an eminent musician, one Dr. Rowton, the college organist, had written music alleged to be based upon the rhythm of ancient Greece, though heaven knows how he achieved it, and this was accompanied by verses intoned by Coryphæus and a chorus of Fifth and Sixth Form schoolboys, to whom was given the appearance of age and dignity by the attachment to their heads of wigs and beards made of cotton-wool.

I liked the drama well enough, but had no interest for the classics. But I possessed an ear tuned to doggerel; and the verses which I contributed to Dr. Rowton's music were infinitely preferred both by the chorus and the lesser educated members of the College.

Petit heure, Pat-a-cake,
Anchovy paste,
All for sevenpence ha'penny.
Thank you, Miss !

This is but one stanza from a series which, had Sophocles been a retail grocer, would certainly have achieved his fortune.

Neither my principal interests of boxing and gymnastics were in those days encouraged at Bradfield.

Dr. Gray had been a bantam-weight champion, but his prowess in fisticuffs only displayed itself with the cane. He was an amazingly agile tennis player, and up to the age of sixty years could run the quarter-mile in under sixty seconds, and often beat the school champion in the sports. In the fives court he was undefeated, due both to his agility and ambidexterity. I was frightened out of my life of Gray. I do not think he won the affection of many, but admiration always.

The School continued to develop—numbers, houses, classrooms, playing fields, scholarships, and athletic distinction—until 1910, when, after thirty years of untiring devotion, came the resignation of Dr. Gray. Gray not only combined in himself an extraordinary personal magnetism, high administrative capacity, oratorical powers, good health, steel sinews, and an amazing

versatility, but the joint office of Warden and Head Master. He knew all: he mastered all: he controlled all. Then, in the hour of her trouble, the World catastrophe engulfed Bradfield. As never before in her history, a man was wanted. He came from Winchester—Robert Douglas Beloe.

The War years must of necessity pale into insignificance the history of Bradfield, as of every other school. Those years 1914-1918 are the history of her sons alone. There will be until the end of our time Old Boys and Masters who will weep as they remember the beautiful minds and bodies of boys butchered to make a Diplomatic holiday. Two hundred and seventy-two boys were taken from Bradfield thus swiftly and suddenly. "They were a wall unto us both by night and day."

A noteworthy fact, indeed one which can to-day be true of few public schools, is that the landscape with the College as its central *motif*, remains the same. While the demands for dwelling-houses, factories, and the hideous erections which we call civilization, have blotted out or destroyed the beauty of the landscape which was once the proud possession of many public schools, Bradfield remains unaltered. A hamlet, creeper-clad cottages, two or three little stores, a famous smithy, the church, the graves—the typical hamlet of Gray's *Elegy*—that is Bradfield. The College is situated on the side of the "Hog's Back," with uninterrupted view across wide ploughlands, sleeping woods, a slow-flowing rivulet—the Pang—where lurk great sleek trout.

"No strident siren breaks the stillness of the hour :
The joyous cry of youth alone prevails ;
The wind in the woods, the birds, the bees hymn Nature's
own most perfect peace."

Truly a faithful setting for an English public school.

My house-master would pad around at night through the corridors and into the dormitories, when often I would feign sleep-walking, or fight furiously with my pillow beneath his astonished gaze. He condemned my activities and friendships, which were both honourable and honest, the latter approved by our respective families; and finally because a repressive system failed to control one both highly strung and imaginative, for the offence of playing a banjo outside his study windows almost on the last day of the term, sent me home suddenly in disgrace to my mother, refusing to keep me a day longer in the College.

Of the landscape in which are set the Public Schools of England

none rivals that of the Berkshire Downs among which the hamlet of Bradfield lies. If the face of England has changed, if quiet vales have been rudely awakened by motor traffic, their pastures and woods made hideous by the incursions of industry and rows of villas, the country around Bradfield remains unspoiled. One may turn aside from the great highway of the Bath Road at Theale, and travel through miles of meadowland, on which are herds of cows grazing, waving corn, backed by deep woods. There is a glimpse of the silver thread of the Pang as it curls beside the narrow road, there are squat farms and cottages of mellow red brick, creeper-clad, heavy-caved, which lie around the trees.

The road to Bradfield mounts almost imperceptibly to the crown of the Hog's Back. From the Quadrangle of the College, in which now is set the War Cross, the countryside is laid out as a map, its landscape traced by elm-crowned hedgerows, and tree-chumps, like turrets. And on the horizon where woods cling to the lip of the Thames Valley is the narrow lane, "Dark Entry," which leads to Pangbourne, ghost-like and terrifying, down whose incline it is said a monk's skull rolls by night. Except for the few engaged in husbandry one may walk for miles without meeting a soul, possibly a boy friend or two, but they are of Bradfield, for the time being, at least, citizens and subjects of the woods and meadows. And at the awakening of each year the copses and fields are filled with spring, anemones and violets, thousands of young rabbits with bobbing tails, the fox and strutting pheasants, lambs, calves, and foals.

No Bradfield boy but can discover himself a part of England, brought up on the main channel of English tradition, nurtured among the most various and extravagant beauties of herself.

CHAPTER IV

I GO SOLDIERING

Art—"The Shop"—K.O.S.B.s—Going East—Egypt—By steamer up the Nile—The call of the desert—Khartoum—Omdurman and its inhabitants—Slatin Pasha—Sand-grouse shooting and shikar.

MY education for the examination had to be completed, a costly business for my mother, and I was sent under the tutelage of a crammer in Surrey. My fellows were an odd collection of dull wits, but what they lacked in learning they made up for in a capacity for drinking, romantic affairs with maid-servants, in sport, and in running up debts with local tradesmen. I played mixed hockey, used to hire a hack and ride over to Hindhead, and sometimes hunt with the Longmoor Military drag-hounds.

I was encouraged in the writing of essays by a tutor who had an ardent interest in sociological questions, and taught me both history and English composition. But my chief delight was to visit artist friends at Hindhead, where I spent delightful Saturdays and Sundays.

Leonard Campbell Taylor, now an Associate of the Royal Academy, and Frank Craig, were both men of genius. The former, after early leanings towards the Pre-Raphaelite School, has come under the influence of the Dutch masters, while Craig, who died during the War in Portugal, in his age, as a draughtsman, was the greatest master of black and white in the country, and contributed notable and inspiring paintings to the public galleries. Craig was married, with two little boys, the elder of whom has inherited his father's genius, and carried off the Gold Medal at the Slade School. Two years after the father's death, Campbell Taylor married Mrs. Craig, a delightful and romantic sequel to the foster parentage of the former's earlier days.

From my earliest youth I had essayed to draw and paint, and received every encouragement from both Craig and Taylor. I used to work in their studios, and in return would sit or stand as

a model, watching them at work. I appear as a beau in Campbell Taylor's "Ballet Dancers," now hanging in the Louvre in Paris and exhibited at the Royal Academy. Hard by the Craigs, in a wooden bungalow on the top of Hindhead, lived a connection of my own, one of the first protagonists of women's suffrage, a Mrs. King Roberts. Mrs. Craig shared her views and we used to sit up of nights in amiable debate. Frank Craig would have none of these notions and was a fierce debater. Mrs. King Roberts, whose husband did not seem to matter, impressed me not only with her views, but by the fact that she was the first woman I had ever observed with bobbed hair and smoking cigarettes. I remember being shocked almost as much by meeting in the flesh the author of *The Yoke*, the first novel with a wildly exciting sexual theme, whose publication at the time outraged the feelings of the *élite*, but was clandestinely read by them all.

After passing into Sandhurst, I was sent by my mother to Switzerland to the house of a German-Swiss pastor, Dr. Trechsel, at Reichenbach in the Bernese Oberland, not far from Kandersteg. I spent two months with him, days of unalloyed joy. He was a great Alpine climber, and besides many lesser scrambles, took me on my first major ascent of the Blumlisalphorn and the Weissfrau.

I was enraptured by the thrill of the ascent, the physical exertion, mental stimulation, and grand views obtained; and there and then determined to carry on the tradition of the Alps and of mountaineering, handed down to me by my father.

Having passed into Sandhurst it was disappointing to me to find myself posted to an infantry company at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich. We were not *persona grata* at "The Shop," being regarded as interlopers, inferiors, or else as those who only desired to play at soldiering. The hereditary training-ground of gunners and sappers had been invaded by footsloggers, and the residents determined that this we should quickly realise.

We closed our ranks. It was the custom at "The Shop" for each term to be at enmity with its junior, and in the frequent clashes which we had with embryo sappers and gunners we possessed always the advantage of unity, whereas the forces of "The Shop" were divided, and we held our own with considerable vigour.

The instruction which we received was very different from the other cadets, but I think we had some advantage over the

students of Sandhurst by sharing certain exercises and professors in common with gunners and sappers. At any rate, it made us more familiar with their outlook. And it is proverbial that sappers are mad, married or Methodist. The officer commanding the infantry company, Major B. T. Buckley of the Northumberland Fusiliers, was a military historian second to none, and interested me deeply in the writings of Hamley, Henderson, Clausewitz and other students of the science of war.

Second to Buckley was "Toc Emma" Hare of the Leicestershires. Never a line officer more spruce or with so perfect a gait. I met him with a flowing beard at Bois Grenier in 1914. Never a line officer more dishevelled, and I, so fresh from his tutelage, having lathered the stubble on my chin with shell-hole water.

I shone in all the studies, and was interested not least in strategy and in military law. I formed a climbing club, whose activities took place mostly by night, when we used to embark upon hazardous adventures over the roofs of the students' dwelling-houses, the chapel and the gymnasium. On one occasion the Climbing Club possessed itself of a number of night utensils and suspended these from the turrets above the library. The authors of this escapade were not discovered. On another, we decorated the lamp-posts running beside the Common towards Woolwich station, also with crockery, again being undiscovered. But it was in offensive action against those who would be sappers and gunners that we directed our most energetic efforts, and we were the storm troops of the Infantry Company. We learnt that an assault was to be carried out against the block of buildings occupied by our most aggressive members, including myself.

In anticipation of the siege we nailed bath-boards across the stairway, making them slippery with soap. This achieved successfully, we raised the ball-cock of the cistern and soon a cascade of water was descending the slippery slope covering the stairs. At their head we mustered, armed with missiles, and from a position almost impregnable, held off the massed attacks of the second company, who cried below for our blood and were stifled by buckets of water. The attack finding itself foiled seized the wooden boxes containing our sports kit and fired them with straw from a rick. Up above we were soon stifled with smoke while the fire sizzled through the water and gripped the stairway. Within a few minutes "K" House was on fire.

The Climbing Club took to the roof and, infuriated as wasps driven from their nest, hurled missiles down upon the attack, scurrying from one building to another. This guerrilla warfare no doubt would have lasted so long as that of von Lettow Vorbeck in East Africa had not the Adjutant appeared and placed the whole of the participants under arrest. The damage cost the ringleaders £7 apiece and we were kept back at the end of the term for three days, in which our minds and bodies were drilled to a better sense of military discipline. I have since learnt that the authorities were greatly pleased with this display of offensive spirit and defensive tactics. This same company carried off one of our members and flung him in the swimming-bath, wherein they pelted him with boots until the rescue party threw most of the offending company into the bath in full mess dress.

The Infantry Company spent a fortnight's firing and musketry course at Gravesend, stationed in an antiquated fort. If the shooting was bad, the amount of alcohol consumed was prodigious. Returning from the town, it was necessary to bicycle along the towpath along the river, and many a cadet who afterwards became an efficient infantry officer, bathed himself in the stream of the Thames. And we experimented one night with the arts of hypnotism, it being my function to purvey the "fluence." A cadet who felt himself capable of making his mind a blank was turned over to my skill. What precisely happened I shall never know, but so far did I succeed in placing him under an evil influence that he passed from consciousness for hours, having repeated the incantation which in buffoonery I had recited to him, and concluded the séance by retching hideously.

We concluded that this was a most dangerous experiment, and no doubt it was. Signalling bored me to tears and I never became proficient, but the riding school was wildly exciting and I won quick approval with the instructors, such favour being exhibited by the most poisonous horses in the school being given to my use. I shall never forget "Snatcher" as long as I live, a mare of dirty habits and most vicious temper. The riding master possessed one classic phrase, which ran as follows: "You look like a monkey riding a bag of nails." It wasn't quite like that, being adjectivally enriched, but no doubt this purveys its sense. Woolwich was great fun, and I never received a "Hoxter," an extra drill.

After having duly passed my studies, I was sent again to Switzerland and climbed the Alps, spending some weeks there-

after at Selkirk with my cousin, Strathearn Steedman, a man typical of his breed and of the Borders.

In the last week of January 1910 I sailed in H.M. troopship *Rohilla* for Egypt to join the 1st Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers. At Victoria Station, equipped with new japanned-tin boxes, trunks, and green canvas field kit, I glowed with pride beneath skin-tight tartan trews, as I saw the porters handling, almost reverently, the baggage emblazoned with my name and rank and regiment. As I stood waiting for the train to move off a very courteous kindly gentleman, dressed as was myself, came up to me and greeted me, Captain C. A. Antrobus. I owe a great deal to his kindness.

We used to sketch together at Khartoum and in India, where he was also my Company Commander. Antrobus, with most other officers whom I knew in the 1st Battalion, was killed in the first landing at Gallipoli—Koe, Cooper, Sanderson, Redpath, Beecher, Cheate, Cruickshank, P. N. Sanderson—all friends.

I was the junior on board and it fell to my lot to be the Orderly Officer for the first twenty-four hours. I knew all about the English Channel, having crossed it several times and having watched also its wild billows from the cliffs of Walmer. I had never observed it lashed to such wild fury as in this January of my twentieth year. As we came out of the Solent the transport met the full force of the storm. It carried little cargo as ballast and rolled appallingly.

Each hour I had to descend and traverse the length and breadth of three decks in order to inspect the fire pickets posted all over the ship.

Most of the men on picket duty leaned helplessly against the bulkheads, puking their insides out, while among two thousand men on board, there was scarcely one who was not in a state of hopeless collapse from sea-sickness. Some lay helplessly in their hammocks, belching through the strings; others had fallen out and lay anywhere upon the decks or in the scuppers, too enfeebled to move.

The stench was ghastly, but this did not distress me so much as the insults to my new uniform. I managed to survive the ordeal, but as a new morning brought calmer weather and I stood on the decks watching the sun struggling through the drifting clouds down Channel, an active deck hand added injury to insult by flinging a bucket of water right over me.

The weather cleared up most generously down the Portuguese

coast and at Gibraltar the officers were favoured with some hours on shore. We passed on to Malta, leaving a draft of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and anchored at Port Said. Here I separated from Antrobus and was posted to Alexandria. From the windows of the train I saw my first Egyptian sunset—a marvellous sight, the palms and sailing dhows silhouetted in deepest purple against a sky and water painted in gold and red. Then suddenly it was night.

The Ras el Tin Barracks were beautifully situated near the sea to the west of the town, and I would willingly have remained longer in Alexandria ignorant of the feast awaiting me. But within two days I received orders to report in Cairo and thence to proceed to Khartoum. I presented myself to Colonel Pinney, the Staff Officer, who afterwards was my Divisional Commander during the Great War, and after spending one night in the famous Shephard's Hotel, I travelled by night to Luxor.

I had already commenced the habit of the diarist, and wrote at length my impressions and concerning my meetings with many people; and I added to the writing sketches of what I saw and of the interesting and funny people that I met. After a hasty view of the Temple of Karnak, I undertook the dull and dusty journey to Shellal. If the journey had been uncomfortable, that on the Sudan Government steamer from Wadi Halfa is sumptuously comfortable.

The East with its beige-coloured people, Arabs of beautiful countenance, Sudanese watermen with bodies like forged bronze, palms and wide-sailed boats reflected in glass-like water, kaleidoscopic colouring, days palpitating with heat, nights cool and starlit, and gorgeous sunlight, made an instant appeal to my imagination, and stirred in me new and strange depths.

We anchored for the first night at Wad es Saboa—the Valley of the Lions. The mural paintings of the ancient temple are in excellent preservation, and following the fall of ancient Egypt, it was used by the Copts as a place of worship. There are crude paintings of Christ and of the twelve apostles, while an altar was erected in the most sacred portion of the older Egyptian Temple. I remembered the Eunuch and the Queen of Ethiopia. But everything about this waterway recalls the forgotten Bible lessons of youth. One sees sometimes little stretches of cultivation, perhaps but a few yards in extent, lying between the arid desert on one side and the river on the other; rocks and sand-banks rich in colour, reds, russets, and browns, but devoid of vegetation;

or perhaps there are graceful palm trees, a groaning, sighing *sakia*; a picturesque village with its minaretted mosque, and long chains of hills, without life, sombre, silent. We passed Korosko and the old castle of Kasr Ibrim, situated on precipitous cliffs, and the Berber village of Toski in which the old Mahdi lies buried, reminiscent of the 1884-5 campaign; and finally examined the finest rock temple in the world, not excepting Ellora and Elephanta in Western India, namely Abou Simbel. The colossal figures of Rameses the Second there sit in serene and amiable imagery looking out over the Nile Valley as they have done for over three thousand years. These figures measure 65 feet high, 25 feet across the chest, and are well proportioned. The forefinger is 3 feet long.

The journey against the stream had occupied two and a half days and on the 3rd February we reached Wadi Halfa where I met and made great friends with the Prince of Augsberg, with whom in later years I shot chamois in the Austrian Tyrol.

For strategic reasons the railways have not been carried between Shellal and Wadi Halfa, thus definitely separating Egypt and the Sudan, economically, and therefore politically. The fact that there is a British control of the head waters of the Nile at Khartoum, where the White Nile joins the Blue, is of immense importance and will always be used by British Governments as a final argument with these Bashi Bazouks, who, styling themselves Egyptians, seek to enslave the Fellahin as the Ramesses enslaved them centuries ago.

Almost as soon as the train entered on its long desert journey, I felt that I was going to a home which would hold and claim me. The huge sands, yellow, orange, scarlet, and crimson, stretching towards the jagged low hills, deep purple silhouettes against an azure sky, seemed to tell me that I had trodden their hot surface at some other time. As I gazed I would discover one camel loping above the hot mirage, and, as I sought its rider, the very brilliance of the sun would dazzle my eyes, so that a host of camelmen appeared, armed to the teeth, swooping from some encampment among the hills towards the cities of the plains: the Sudan, with its straight burning deserts and sharp teeth-like hills—a war-torn sword with blood on it: each hill-top tipped with crimson, and camelmen riding hard up the straight blade of the plains towards a point which vanished in the blood-red of the setting sun.

I felt I knew these deserts: they were familiar, intimate,

calling to my bones and heart ; and as we paused for a moment at one of the halts, I would look eagerly from the window and scan the dark faces of the guards, and seek for recognition in those of the tribesmen who watched immutably the passage of this engine of civilization. My whole physical being glowed to the warmth of the desert, and my eye lifted with gladness to the sight of the curling Nile which would appear and reappear, glistening white against the reds and purples of the sand and hills.

My first Sudanese night closed in upon me, the cerulean of the sky being extracted before the injection of pink and orange, flooding to red like the cutting of a human artery in water. Purple clouds hovered in the skies, like vultures waiting to devour the landscape. No wind stirred. Then for a brief half-hour sight and sound were arrested while the afterglow, something unparalleled in its loveliness, battled with night, and then quite suddenly went out. A cool wind arose from off the desert and the sky became black, inky black, and high in it the stars were hung like tiny lanterns. Those who dwelt or hovered beside the railway halts drew their burnouses closely around their heads, and I could see only their black eyes twinkling in the lights of the stationary train. My body reposed in all the European comfort of Lord Kitchener's masterpiece of engineering, but my heart was far away in dreamland among the encampments of the Bedouin.

The morning came and we were at Atbara, and soon thereafter crossing the great railway bridge which spans the Blue Nile at Khartoum. For a moment it repelled me, but I had no time then to think of the desert or to attempt to recapture my dreams ; for already I was being inspected and considered by those of the Regiment who had joined the train north of the river and who desired to see what manner of person was the latest recruit to the Regiment.

For six weeks I paraded on the sandy square before the British barracks learning again what I already knew and could achieve with perfection, rifle exercises and foot drill. But I was dismissed from the square long before more senior subalterns had succeeded in pleasing the Adjutant, Crake, who was a stickler for perfection. And then, apart from parades and social obligations, I was free to follow my heart into the desert.

When the sun was at its zenith and others were sleeping in their quarters during the midday heat, clad in an open shirt and loose trousers I would mount my pony and ride out into the

desert beside a neighbouring village. Here I would dismount and hitch my pony to the stump of a mimosa bush, divest myself of my clothing, and sit or run naked in the sun, the sand burning my feet until they were hard like those of the native and until my skin was bronzed like that of the Arab. When my pigmentation was complete, sometimes by night also I used to roam in the villages or in the vast suk of Omdurman, join in the prayers of the faithful when the meuzzin called from his watch-tower on the mosque, or close my eyes when the sun was lost in a tempest of fire and dream of camelmén and of the Arabian Nights.

I used to hover on the edge of a village, watching the old men as they chattered, and the boys as they played their games. And when I had acquired something of the language, I became more venturesome and would join the men, or sit with chosen company watching day turn into night.

In the Regiment I knew only of the desert men who at the sight of a British officer hopped hastily from their camels or donkeys and stood making obeisance, while the officer rode to the club to get his "chota peg." And I heard of those who refused such civilities, to whom the curse of "N'Allah din suk" implied a flogging by the henchmen of the Mudir of Khartoum. But far out in the desert, or sitting among the mimosa trees beside the waters of the Nile, the Mudir was unknown or forgotten. And I could commune with my friends, our minds in tune with the stillness of the open spaces or swaying to the rhythm of deep flowing waters.

The deserts of Northern Africa have never ceased to call me, and I still rejoice in the friendship of great bearded warriors, Yussim Hassim, Mahomet Ali, and those other good spirits who set my heart on fire with the flame of the desert.

Everything in Khartoum and in its surrounding deserts stirred my deepest curiosity. I purchased a waler, a big-boned, foul-tempered pony already trained to stick and ball, and I used to canter out into the desert with a polo stick or ride through the villages completely absorbed with watching the statuesque negroid Arabs at their work. More often I found them sitting in the sun on their haunches, gossiping; while their women chanted to a not unmusical refrain, grinding the *dhurra* to make the daily bread; or as they journeyed, chattering in a high falsetto while walking in long lines in single file with great earthenware jars balanced on their heads.

In youth the figures of the Sudanese women are matchless in

their beauty, erect, tall and shapely ; but before twenty years of life have passed already they have begun to deteriorate to the appearance of wizened hags.

I loved to feel the active withers of my pony between my legs, and he had a nice turn of speed as I first discovered when, tired of twisting and turning after the ball and trying to master the art of a back-hander, whose mysteries were of no interest to this hard-mouthed brute, I descried a jackal on the edge of the mirage and spurred my pony after him. Though the jackal cannot jink like the hog of India and possesses no weapons with which to charge, he makes fair game for the chase. We used to ride out sometimes in the evening, a party of us, armed with hide whips and round up jackal or run the pariah dogs back to their villages.

My first acquaintance with the natives and customs in the villages which hugged the outskirts of Khartoum took me often further afield to the straggling city of Omdurman, separated by the Blue Nile from the converging of the two rivers on which Khartoum stands. Omdurman straggles for seven miles along the river bank, and though it possessed modern stores under the control of Greek traders, a tramway of almost prehistoric type, one could wander for hours and for miles among the low mud-built dwellings, being confronted at almost every turn of a street by different types of men and women. There were nut-brown Hadendoa, with fine black hair brushed up like a mop for twelve or fourteen inches above the head : immense Shilluks and Dinkas with legs as thin as those of a stork, men from the marshes of the upper Nile who, as an example of reversion to type, possessed the long thin lower projections of the water-bird. Their hair was plastered with cow-dung and drawn into the shape of a crescent or of horns and quaintly patterned.

There were Jurs, also marsh-dwellers, hideous beyond imagination, but the domes of whose female breasts seemed, amongst this polyglot people, the most beautiful to my youthful eye: Baggara, negroid Arabs, thin straight noses, thick-lipped, dark bay in colour, vivacious, light-hearted, to me physically and mentally the most attractive of all the races of Africa. And there were Bishareen, "fuzzy-wuzzies" too, like the Hadendoa, but their skin of lighter texture ; and endless numbers of people of Central and West Africa, from the South, from Somaliland, British East Africa ; Barotse and Mushakulmbwe from the south, of all variations of sun-colour, from white to ebony-black ; dwarfs and giants, the



THE AUTHOR WITH THE OMDAH AND SHEIKHS OF EILA FUN

beautiful and the hideous. On very many afternoons and evenings I used to go with my sketch-book and wander among the alleys of Omdurman, and I preferred these visitations to the dust and ill-success of attempting to compete at polo on the back of a raw-mouthed waler which cost me £15, paid by instalments.

During the stifling hot months of July and August, when *haboobs*, sand-storms, almost a mile high, three miles in depth, and terrific in their fury, lashed the barrack walls and filtered in through the crevices of the window and doors of my quarters, I would sit with an Arab teacher from the Khartoum College, and quickly mastered the language, a grounding for which had been obtained in a study of Urdu at Woolwich. Armed with new words and phrases I would go upon many an afternoon and evening into the byways of that fascinating city and talk with the inhabitants of the mysteries and emotions of life.

These people possessed no politics, no arts, no mechanical contrivances, no learning other than the proverbs of the Koran, no clothes but a linen sheet, no personal adornments other than a few beads or a trinket of silver filigree, and no interest in the intricacies of commerce and finance. Their life was for life itself and their desire to experience every emotion of which the nervous system physically is capable. So they would dance to the throb of the drum until their brown eyes rolled in their sockets, and perspiration streamed over the velvet of the skin. They would gorge themselves hugely until their stomachs were distended almost as tight as the skins of their drums, and they would entwine themselves and revel in an ecstasy of physical exaltation. I would watch them as in a coma of *hashish* they surrendered their physical life to the dim obscurities of Cosmos and would wonder why it was that Western people were so wholly engaged in the futilities of finance and in the beggarly occupations produced in the making of machinery which saves labour. These people laboured not ; they laughed and loved.

Khartoum, for all that it was a city of soldiers and of officials with a complement of traders and a native quarter whose inhabitants mostly were engaged in the service of officialdom, was not devoid of social activities although its European ladies, apart from occasional tourists, were limited to a round dozen or more, who spent the winter months with their husbands under the kindly autocracy of Lady Wingate. If a young man desired a good friend, it was both his duty and pleasure to leave cards immediately upon His Excellency Sir Rudolph von Slatin Pasha,

who seemed to me neither aged nor wrinkled after his terrible experience of twelve years' imprisonment in the Khalifa's camp.

I noted in my diary at the time that "he is fully and markedly a Major-General of the British Army and as Inspector-General of the Sudan has probably a deeper knowledge of Central Africa and of its tribes and of the arts and cunning of the Arab mind than any man living. In Slatin Pasha the Arab slave trader found his match indeed."

In my first year, Lord Kitchener revisited the Sudan and was greeted on the quay by thousands of women, clad in the blue-dyed draperies of their custom. These women whom one met in pairs and in groups, chattering shrilly by day in every corner of the new town laid out in the semblance of the Union Jack, were known as "the Khartoum widows" and were in fact those of soldiers killed at the battle of Omdurman or the grass widows of men serving in the Sudanese regiments, separated from their husbands and earning a bare livelihood by scavenging the streets. It is true that within six months of the mobilization of the Khartoum widows there was not a mosquito to be found in this hitherto fever-smitten death-trap.

The widows, with shrill cries, made by placing the two fore-fingers in the mouth and wobbling them up and down between the teeth, cried loudly to the great man and presented, through an *omdah*, a petition, the purport of which was a re-union with their husbands. It said, "There are ten thousand hungry women in Khartoum."

On New Year's night, Kitchener dined with my Regiment in Mess. I was Orderly Officer of the day and it fell to my duty to escort him from the Palace, when during the drive I found him most amiable to so young an officer. After dinner and the departure of Lord Kitchener, having toasted in Gaelic to the greatness of Scotland and danced in our shirt-sleeves to innumerable reels, some of us for the entertainment of our fellows arrayed ourselves in white sheets, and with tow from gun-cases on our heads, presented a *deluka*. Possessed of some agility and having studied also these contortions, with an indiscretion ill-fitted to the Orderly Officer of the day, but momentarily stripped of my Sam Browne belt, I headed these orgies with a full sense of realism, though it must be confessed that those who also participated, as was customary on New Year's night, were so engulfed in an alcoholic stream that they could not perceive the realism which no doubt I succeeded in putting into my own

performance. Later in the night I rode through the desert, perched somewhere on the back of a cantering donkey and inspected the desert guard, though I have never had any recollection of having done so.

My syce, Mahommed Ali, a young Baggara Arab, ran the three miles of my tour of inspection beside me and finally fished me out from the waters of the Nile, wet and sobered. I have been intoxicated twice in my life. New Year's Eve, 1911, was the first occasion.

We played furious squash rackets even when the temperature stood at 110° in the shade. The effect of this exercise was to produce in me a desire for learning at times not given to field exercises, and to those long marches through the desert when meat-eating soldiers filled the air with their aroma. But the insistence of the sun and of the atmospheric East turned our heads sometimes to ways which appalled the chaplain. When bored, on band nights, of steeplechasing donkeys through the Mess, and jumping ponies over sofas, even of conducting the long-suffering musicians, we would ride off into the native quarter and beat loudly upon the wooden doors of houses in which rumour had it there were young girls, the daughters of Khartoum widows, whose hunger had never been satiated. And often we were admitted. Though I do not pretend to any prudishness, I found these exhibitions not at all amusing, and with an alcoholic background they must have been as disgusting, though well financed, to the maidens.

The troops in these respects were not well favoured. It was said of the Sudanese Army that until a young Sudanese soldier had been impregnated with syphilis, like distemper in a puppy, he was not properly equipped for life service in the Army. The record of British regiments in Egypt and the Sudan very nearly sustained that of the Sudanese, for before the Regiment left for India over 70 per cent of our men had been in hospital, scourged with this loathsome disease. Whatever may be the opinion of rigid ecclesiasticalism or of moralists at home, I think the Army may be grateful that Lord Kitchener insisted upon the State supervision and medical control of brothels. For after all is said and done, East is East and in India the profession of the harlot is an honourable one, and an institution which can neither be appreciated nor understood by those who know nothing of Hindu and Mahommedan religions and culture.

Of the lighter forms of amusement in Khartoum, pigeon and

sand-grouse shooting and gazelle hunting were for me both cheap and possessed attractions. I had never even fired a gun at home and though a marksman with a rifle neither understood the technique nor was enamoured of the double-barrelled lethal weapon which had been presented to me by a kindly aunt. Very soon I recognized that I could not for the life of me hit a bird on the wing and among men brought up to the gun I experienced a sense of growing shame at my failure. So that in the evenings, I would stalk forth among the mimosa trees into which the pigeons came to roost, and, standing below a tree, would loose off both barrels among the branches, sometimes bringing down as many as half a dozen birds with the double pull, and would bring back the results of the massacre with some pride for the mess pot.

But there was an exhilarating romance about a sand-grouse shoot. A start in the darkness, the journey by steam-launch up the placid waters of the Nile, to one of the great sand-banks to which in the early morning the birds came down to drink. The sight of the ink-blue sky growing slowly paler and the lantern-like stars going out one by one, then the very suddenness of dawn, pale lemon, orange, flaming crimson, and a new day was upon us, the chill of night turning into the warm glow of the desert, and the launch drew up and we clambered out with our ammunition bags and guns to take up posts, separated from each other by some three hundred yards, squatting in readiness for the arrival of the birds, on the sand-bank.

Then on the horizon, whirling this way and that, we would descry a brown smear in the sky, in diamond formation, descending always towards the bank. They would fly out of range up and down two or three times while we cowered into the sand, and woe-betide him who loosed off his gun too soon, as happened more than once and thus destroyed a day's shooting ; but realizing my lack of skill, unselfishly as it appeared, I always chose the last station which, on the more favoured bank of the Soba Shoot, was round the corner, out of sight.

No one observed me when I pooped into the brown and brought down a hail of birds, leaving a pale blue hole in the centre of the brown, while hosts of little boys scampered and swam in the water rescuing the wounded and the dying and picking up those dispossessed of heads and wings. I was a great shot on one particular day, though I saw to it that the dismembered birds were carried off as loot by my young attendants.

On Christmas Eve, 1910, as one of a party of six, I went to Hassa Heissa, a journey of five hours by train up the White Nile. We spent two days shooting, securing a large bag of pigeons and grouse, with exotic and delirious nights among people not previously so closely united with the white rulers of the Sudan.

But I loved best the long camel treks into the desert with my black-bearded shikar. The latter had fought in the Khalifa's army at Omdurman and gloried in giving graphic descriptions of the battle and of the chatter of automatic guns. Hag Utta Menan, my shikar, was immensely strong, with arms and shoulders roped with muscles, a fair musician and a profound philosopher who for my edification would read signs in the sand and instruct me in the lure of the desert. He could see for miles and miles, and could read the ever-shifting sands like a book. He brought me good sport and many heads and fine venison. Before entering into the deep sleep of physical exhaustion, wrapped in a blanket beneath the stars, with the man beside me, and our three grunting camels, I would gaze into the limitless expanse of the skies, and feel myself almost uplifted to them as in exhaustion my consciousness faded from human contact into the beckonings and callings of the universe.

Those are experiences which few receive in the cities of civilization, though during the War, huddled beneath a damp blanket on the chalk downs of the Somme during a lull in the fighting, or in an open emplacement when the guns were silent at Passchendaele, I would experience again the intoxication of sleep entered into in this fashion.

I met all kinds of interesting people. Roosevelt, who shot big game with a battery of guns and who lectured British officers on the administration of the Sudan. I noted in my diary: "Does Roosevelt dare to criticize an administration after a seven-day' tour and after-dinner conversations with a few nationalists. He would be as wise to condemn the British Constitution after consultation with Victor Grayson. The opinion of Slatin, Wingate, or of Kitchener—wisely withheld—would form better ground for a parliamentary debate than the vapourings of this supercharged ex-President."

And there was the Duke of Augsberg who took me with him to shoot on the upper Nile. And an American widow who made passionate love to me and twitted me with wearing "the smallest hat and the tightest trousers" she had ever observed as covering for a human being—a compliment to glengarry and strapped

trews. And there were young officers, who as Bimbashi and El Kimakan, commanded Sudanese battalions, with whom I used to stay and who were my envy.

Being a good draughtsman I was entrusted with the survey of the banks of the Nile between Khartoum and Shendi. This month in the desert, with our camels, camping amid the green patchwork of tiny villages, bathing in the pools of the Nile, with long marches by day through mimosa scrub and over stony deserts, I remember as one of the most attractive periods of my life. The camp at Shabluka Cataract amid scenery of matchless grandeur, beneath Gebel Royane, a mountain whose precipitous cliffs descended to the cataract, was supremely attractive. And in this trek I escaped from the barrack quarters of civilization which, through the call of the desert, I had begun to loathe. This hatred was increased because my stuffy room was infested with tarantula spiders as large as a man's hand, which would drop on to my bare skin as I lay in bed, or scurry up and down the walls and over the floor whilst I pursued them with a polo stick or tennis racket. Infinitely did I prefer the warm sand and the jabberings of men inured to the simplicities of simple agriculture to the sports, club life, alcohol, and after-dinner absurdities of regimental life.

CHAPTER V

KHARTOUM TO THE HIMALAYAS

Mapping the desert—The feast of Kurban Beiran—Haboobs—Trooping to India—Bombay—Marching through the foothills—Under the Himalayas—Amateur theatricals—A Regimental rag—Stabbed within a quarter-inch of life—Boxing—Khud race described.

THIS long camel trek from Khartoum to Shendi was filled with excitement, not the least being the transport of our camels over the Nile at Metemmeh. We left this village of battle memory at seven o'clock in the morning after a bitterly cold night which I spent on an angerieb with two blankets. Apart from the cold, carried in a hurricane of wind, I shivered with fear lest I be bitten by the calahazar, the native bed-bug. One bite invariably kills, bringing on fever, then a relapse, then fever again, and finally death in about a year's time. There is only one known case of recovery, and the calahazar is the terror of the native tribes.

We rode four miles, taking our camels down on to a sand-bank. There was no sign of the alleged ferry and only an old gyassa without masts lying off the sand-bank full of water. On the opposite shore, six hundred yards away, was another gyassa, seated beside which we could see through our glasses a group of women. But they will sit all night or for a year with their packages hopefully waiting and gossiping. We whistled and fired shots in the air, and finally after an hour's waiting an old man pulled across in the most awful apology for a boat I have ever seen. If there had not been a boy in the stern, bailing for life, the boat would have sunk in midstream. We learnt from this man that the ferry was not likely to appear, so we proceeded to bail out the gyassa on the sand-bank. When it was dried out I went for a trip to test its seaworthiness. The boat had no oars, but one of the natives whipped off his turban and made it into a sail, and we reached the opposite bank quite safely. I made the return trip bringing over some of the women on the understanding that they would assist us to get the camels on board.

We took over all our mounts one by one, lifting them bodily into the boat and then tying them down, lest they jump overboard.

Shendi is a town of some size, and an important market-place. It resisted the Khalifa and most of its inhabitants, Bisharreen, were put to the sword ; but it has grown since in prosperity, with large numbers of native stores selling nuts, cloths, dhurra bread, mats, coffee, and donkey saddles. I made several sketches in the market-place and was surrounded by a crowd so great that it was quite impossible to see what I was doing. The school-master, an old Arab, came out and tried to clear away his boys ; and to their delight I made a rapid sketch of his favourite pupil, which he told me was "most quics," in return for which he presented me with a magnificent pair of red native shoes.

The men meanwhile had let themselves loose in the native cafés, and when I returned to our camp I found my colour-sergeant and most of the men thoroughly drunk, but as I could not put them all under arrest I allowed them to sober off until the morning and then gave them an oration on the perils of drink, an effort which cut very little ice with hard-bitten soldiery.

During the long trek back again to Khartoum through the desert, I enjoyed some excellent gazelle and bustard shooting. If I was a bad shot with a gun, I was a perfect marksman with the rifle, and could always kill game at three hundred yards or at even longer range. Of all the dishes which I have eaten, I knew of nothing more succulent than the liver of a gazelle, or the breast of the great bustard.

On the 24th March great preparations had been made in Omdurman and Khartoum for the celebration of the feast of Kurban Beiran. Coloured poles, banners, and festoons were everywhere erected, a quaint admixture of ancient and modern. With Slatin, seven of us left the Palace in the evening and were conveyed by steamer to Omdurman. We landed between two ranks of Sudanese soldiers bearing lamps, making a lane about a hundred yards long. Then, mounting donkeys which were in readiness, we rode through the Khalifa Gate of Omdurman, and found ourselves in the midst of an enormous crowd of natives who had come in from every quarter of the Sudan—from Kassala, Kamlin, the Western Desert, Dongola, the Bahr el Ghazal, from the White and the Blue Nile. We passed in procession up a long lane of natives also bearing lamps, and beneath innumerable lighted arches, to a large marquee wherein we were received by officers of the Egyptian Army.



Here we were regaled with cigarettes and Portugane, a sticky, soft drink made from tangerines. Sometimes in Mess we used to drink Portugane and whisky. The concoction was known as "a White Nile."

After having shaken hands *à la Parisienne* with some one hundred and fifty persons we went out to see the *zîkr*. These consist of various dances in mass similar to those which I had often seen in the alleys of Omdurman. But now, in mass contact, the natives worked themselves to a frenzy of excitement. The show seen by tourists at Suez, known as the Dancing Dervishes, is a very poor and unimpassioned replica of a *zîkr* in the heart of Omdurman. In one dance two groups of men faced one another, leaping and twisting the trunks of their bodies right and left from side to side, uttering the cry "Allah!" at each half-turn. Both lines were perfectly synchronized and they moved at prodigious speed. I witnessed this exhibition at ten o'clock at night and the performance had been continued without cessation already since sundown.

The performers were by this time in a frenzy of excitement, pouring with perspiration from their almost naked bodies, the sockets of their eyes deeply sunk and their eyeballs rolling hideously. Every now and then as we watched, an older man would drop down from exhaustion, and we were told that often at Kurban Beiran in such an ecstasy, men passed from this life to Paradise.

The dance is purposed to continue until midnight, but it is quite impossible to stop those who have not already fainted from fatigue. Indeed before we left in the early hours of the morning, many were still to be found dancing amidst the bodies of those who had sunk to the ground in a state of coma.

In other groups men were bending backwards and forwards at high speed and others leaping into the air, their legs kept taut and rigid throughout the movements. In still another group the men were sitting in a long ellipse, one taking the lead and reciting passages from the Koran, accompanied by swaying movements of the body, faithfully copied by all in the circle. All those participating in the *zîkrs*, many hundreds, induced self-hypnotism, some falling into a trance and others into extraordinary physical convulsions.

To Western notions, this form of adoration of the Supreme Being may appear loathsome or absurd, but an understanding of the Oriental mind and of the modern teachings of psychology

taken in conjunction with the custom, environment, temperature, and topography of the Sudan, explains many things obscured from the puritanical mind and outlook of inhabitants of northern hemispheres. Here is worship with body and mind, in rhythmic exultation.

A large and important sect was gathered round the very old Sheikh of Kassala, with whom I shook hands. The Sheikh is a descendant of the Prophet and at the time of the Mahdi rising was invited to be one of the four Khalifas. This he refused to do, because, as he said, "I am greater than the Mahdi." This was a huge gathering, principally Baggara Arabs from the Western Desert, chanting the Koran and bowing their foreheads low to the ground, and in a circle beyond and about him, men and boys were leaping with spears and flaming torches yelling in unison "*Wa ha laki!*" (we are the best); while more distantly a large group of women, resembling strutting pouter pigeons, solemnly went through the evolutions of the *deluka*.

I know of no place more attractive and in which I was more healthy and mind-satisfied than in Khartoum and Omdurman.

The heat during June was stifling, the haboubs blinding and continued to choke everything with evil-smelling sand and dust. The wind veered round to the south and blew steadily from the Equator. A plague of insects covered everything. Sand-flies were a perfect scourge, so that we slept in thick socks, gloves, with towels over our faces, mosquito-curtains being useless. Many of us slept on the roof but were driven down at midnight by tearing sand-storms which would rip the clothes from the bed and carry sheets and pillows in their whirling embrace.

The river rapidly rose owing to the rains in the Abyssinian mountains and the sand-banks disappeared. I notice a comment in my diary upon Gordon: "A visit to Khartoum shatters the pedestal upon which Gordon, as a hero, stood. No doubt as a devout faithful man, he was all that one's youth imagined him to be. He died nobly, but he might have saved those with him in Khartoum had he practised military arts more than preaching to his followers. His queer moods and vacillating policy made of him a difficult man with whom to work, while his attacks upon Slatin, whose genius could have saved the garrison, were most unfair."

An excitement of some moment, synchronizing with the death of King Edward, was the appearance of Halley's comet. The natives were greatly alarmed by this phenomenon, and the

mullahs led many of them to believe that this appearance would signify the end of British rule in the Sudan. Two companies embarked therefore, in double-decked barges, and were towed up the Blue Nile to Soba in the district of Eila Fun, as a show of force. We entertained the sheikhs and the Omdah of the district with a gramophone and innumerable cigarettes, while performing military evolutions around the villages ; and all was peace.

In February 1911, the Battalion entrained for Port Sudan, where it embarked in a troopship for Bombay.

I stood with eager eyes, leaning over the rails from the troop deck as the *Dongola* steamed into Bombay harbour. I had fed myself on Kipling and felt strangely drawn towards the millions who, mostly unheeding the British Raj, live a life of which their rulers have been also almost unheeding. India, with its thousand religions, septs, and clans, with its minarets and mosques, and with its voices, which you can hear if you listen for them, called to me.

Almost before I stepped ashore, a "bearer," who was to be my friend and counsellor, my dresser, masseur, gun-cleaner, and major-domo of my staff, who had been sent to me by a friend in the hills, stood before me. Wazir Ali Khan, a great man, an aristocrat among his own people, over six foot in height, handsome as an eagle, beard and whiskers brushed, lithe and active as a cat, soft-footed, swift, keen-eyed, everything that I had hoped my "bearer" would be. His home was beyond the Khyber. He might have taken a pale-faced kid, for I was barely twenty, but the lad of his adoption was bronzed, steeped with the sun, almost worthy of his own tribe. I came under the ordinance of his knowledge and to him I owe everything that I know of India.

We entrained for Bareilly, journeying through the plains in weather stifling hot. From Bareilly the train proceeded into the Indian foothills, coming to rest at Railhead, a place named Kathgodam.

The Battalion was here met by a Babel of voices, by hundreds of lowing oxen harnessed to great creaking carts. On to these the whole of the regimental baggage was loaded, and then we commenced the long trail up to Ranikhet. The march followed a winding road, through dense pine forests, thickly strewn with rhododendrons, and we accomplished the three stages, with camping-grounds organized at distances of twenty miles apart.

It is a thirsty road, a dusty one, its bridges traversing great gushing streams, where lurk the mahseer, and sometimes winding along precipitous edges. As the band or pipes suddenly turned a hairpin bend, thousands of chattering monkeys would drop from the trees and scurry down the road in front of us.

Each day the temperature grew cooler as we rose thousands of feet going towards the Himalayas, but it was not until ten minutes of the end of our journey, entering the cantonments of Ranikhet, that the magnificent panorama of these gigantic mountains was presented before our gaze.

We gasped as we beheld so magnificent a prospect, the lower slopes blue in the haze, the peaks centred by Nanda Devi and Trisul towering to the skies and delicately etched like an aquatint with pale rose in the evening light. But I remember that in this revelation of the mountains, the spiritual home of all the Hindu religions, I lost my sense of India, with its palpitating plains, colour, and throbbing heat, and it was not until many months afterwards, when dimly I began to understand something of India and her inspirations, that I could contemplate the Himalayas without a feeling that the India of my dreams had disappeared.

It fell again to my lot on the first day after arrival to be the Orderly Officer of the day, and I remember the tragic comedy of that first tour of duty. If the Khartoum widows had pined for their husbands, or at least for relief from sexual hermitage, the men of the King's Own Scottish Borderers after the segregations and perils of Khartoum were eager to discover some fairy in this fairyland who might relieve them from the repression of exile. It was the duty of the Orderly Officer to visit the Government-controlled brothels in the *burra bazaar*. This establishment possessed six workers in permanent employment and up to the hour of twelve midnight, when it was the duty of the Orderly Officer to close the gates, some hundreds of men had partaken of the fruits of the bedchamber.

At Woolwich I had studied Urdu, and so I talked with one, Krishna, a maiden, as refined and beautiful as any of our aristocracy. It did not seem to worry her one little bit that she had been of service to so many soldiers. On the contrary she was rather proud of her feat. With my eye, I compared her with the other ladies and I regretted that she was an inmate of what in Europe is known as a house of ill-fame. Later I made little sketches of her and tried to persuade her to leave the house, but

though she would have given me all that lust might desire, to my will she was unresponsive.

But in India, broadly, the profession of a prostitute is an honourable one ; and because it is in India I do not quarrel with it.

As a regimental officer I had begun to feel my feet and was not unpopular, for I was full of fun and possessed also of a flair for parlour tricks and for improvisation. I re-formed the boxing club and began to take a very active part in its engagements in the ring. I fought and nearly slaughtered by my onslaught a gunner officer hitherto unbeaten, and trained and carried through many victories my pets, Brady, Garrioch, and Bandsman Blake, names which made history in the world of fisticuffs. The club, with its dancing, mild tennis, gin, and poodle faking, bored me, so I organized a dramatic society and commenced writing burlesques for its performance, set to music by the Regimental Bandmaster and schoolmaster. We opened the theatre, for which I had painted both the proscenium and the scenery, with an old farce, *The Area Belle*, in which, having shaved my regulation moustache to the smallest bristles and cloaked it with grease, I played the part of the belle. I was extraordinarily agile on my feet and the bandmaster's wife, who in earlier days had had some connection with the stage, taught me to ballet dance. My audience of soldiers, mostly our own men and Scaforths, rocked in their seats with glee and encouraged me, I fear, to much vulgarity ; but the regimental dramatic club was a splendid offset to the lure of the brothel even though the ladies of the cast lacked the special charms of "The Gaiety."

The second presentation was a most ambitious affair, *Bluebeard Re-blued*, or *The Last Straw*. Having regard to my remarks concerning the encouragement of soldiers, and to principal ladies, the alternative title was not inappropriate. I played the part of Fatima, supported by a chorus of bandboys dressed in ravishing toilettes, and so successful was the improvisation that a visiting General remarked from the stalls to the bandmaster, "What beautiful girls !" to which he retorted, "You ought to see 'em in their baths, sir !"

We followed this venture with a topical skit on *The Merchant of Venice*, for which I wrote quantities of ribald topical lyrics. Shylock was a top-hatted moneylender, Portia the keeper of a boarding-house, Bassanio (myself) a trick cyclist, and so on. I think I should have been court-martialled when in the final

act, after a visit to the Sergeants' Mess during an interval, immediately afterwards, I cycled successfully into the orchestra, nearly causing a riot, and plunged through a tympany drum. But it would have been difficult to prefer a charge against me of "conduct unbecoming that of an officer and a gentleman" when garbed in the role of Bassanio burlesqued. Moreover, it would have been necessary to add a further charge, namely, that at the foot of my humorous programme I placed the words, "God save the King, and Heaven help the audience." *Lèse-majesté*, so grave, but laughable and providing as to excuse the lesser offence of being an inexperienced cyclist. But after these and other adventures my Colonel thought it wise to send me far into the country, that I might work off steam among the foothills. I was therefore appointed Regimental Scout Officer, a task peculiarly after my own heart, and with an experienced N.C.O. and a bunch of youngsters whom I chose myself, we pushed off into the hills towards Almora, the home of the Ghurkas, and the Pindari Glacier.

I enjoyed running up and down the khud-side and prepared some excellent sketches and surveys which were duly submitted to the General as evidence of the professional progress of young officers.

One incident I would not relate did I not think that it profoundly affected the whole of my subsequent career. An officer had joined the Regiment from the Colonies—I will not be specific. He was reported to be fabulously rich. As a regiment, with one or two exceptions, we were equally poor and already had borrowed from Indian moneylenders. But in Egypt, where polo had been cheap, we had carried all before us, and it was the intention of the wealthier enthusiasts to sustain this reputation.

Angello Capato, as we called our Colonial, was expected handsomely to contribute to the polo fund and to provide ponies for others to ride to renewed glory. But Angello was not interested and in consequence was unpopular.

He possessed, moreover, desires and habits in his bungalow which we did not approve. It was decided therefore to raid his quarters one night after mess. Six of us, stripped to the waist, made the assault, one with good intentions. Angello was within. He defied our entry. Being lusty, therefore I charged the door and burst its bottom bolt, and was received by Angello on the point of his sword. This was the first occasion on which my body had been spitted, and the blood gushed out in a red stream. He

stabbed not only immediately below the heart, but in five other places in the body. Had it not been for the presence of mind of one subaltern, most certainly I should have bled to death.

We demanded, and properly so, Angello's head on a charger, but the Staff refused a court martial and held us all guilty of a regimental rag, which it was not, and we were deprived of six months' leave, I think a gross injustice. Angello was sent off to a gymnasium course and we did not see him again. He fell in Flanders. But the loss of blood, pints of it, shock and excitement, as well as enforced rest, had some effect on my mentality, because I became seized with the idea that I was wasting my life in the Army and began to make attempts to escape from an existence which alternately I loved to distraction and loathed with all my being. I fought with pent-up fury in the ring ; then followed every insane whim of a senior Captain who successfully degraded himself and spoilt me, and finally I conceived the idea that, being half-way to Australia, I would throw up my commission and go to this land of reputed opportunity. But before I could give effect to any such plan I had won high honour for an essay on military strategy and was appointed Staff Officer to the Durbar Committee.

A Commanding Officer with perhaps a better knowledge of human nature would have sent so volatile a creature as myself shooting in Kashmir or advised him to transfer to a native regiment in which they take things more seriously, especially since I had made myself quickly proficient in the language, and exhibited an ardent interest in native life.

I note in my diary, May 1911 : "Boxing is very strenuous. Had my nose smashed and broken, but I am in tiptop condition. 'Marzouk,' my beastly pony for which I paid only £20, garnered from the sale of sketches, has been sold for £12, having bitten most people in the station and kicked the rest. Great fancy-dress ball, in which I went as a Dervish ; most brilliant spectacle. We spent the afternoon decorating the ballroom with green stuff. I dashed home at 4.30 a.m., was on the Range at 6 a.m., and spent the rest of this day superintending the shifting of scenery, lighting, and printing of programmes, seating ; and was then presented as 'The Area Belle' with a bouquet, and that despite her smashed nose."

I weighed-in for my boxing contests at ten stone seven, and only lost one fight, to a gunner, a brother Scot, who weighed twelve stone seven, and in six rounds nearly hammered me into pulp.

I was very successful in exhibiting at the Naina Tal Fine Art Society. I sold five pictures for 270 rupees, won a first prize, a fourth, and two highly commended. *The Pioneer* devoted many columns to our activities in Ranikhet ; and in commenting upon the production of *Bluebeard Re-blued*, after warmly congratulating me upon the scenery and dresses, painted and designed by myself, and upon the libretto, for which I was largely responsible, continued, "Julia infected everybody and everything with her madcap ways. She was excellent."

At the termination of the annual training I submitted a proposal to my Colonel, that as its test, I might organize a khud race, in emulation of the agility and mountain skill of the Pathans. The race was over a course of three and a half miles as the crow flies, partly through dense forests, crossing mountain torrents, and included the scaling of rocky mountains with a sheer drop of three hundred feet. The race was carried out in full fighting kit with rifles. Over four hundred men took part and three hundred and seventy-eight finished the course. My own company entered ninety-two men and won the most points, getting in fifty-nine men within the time limit. I myself ran third in the race, but, as the leader of my company, was responsible also to see that my team kept well in the vanguard. In later years, just before the War, when serving with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, I instituted a similar race across the moor and heights above Loch Lomond, which I won.

What a race ! Six hundred men at the starting-point. The pistol shot. We leap forward together, men on parade, left foot foremost ; it must have been so. Marching boots thud on the hard soil, accoutrements jangle. Someone swears as he trips in the mass. The swifter runners, I among them, forge to the front. I glance round : my company is well up, close upon my heels. I recognize the faces among the bobbing heads, mouths open, eager eyes, some already sweating. We cross the main road. We pass between a crowd of senior officers and ladies. They cheer encouragement.

We press upwards, now making a way through tall fir trees and pines, stumbling over huge ant-hills. It is gruelling work this. The sweat pours over my forehead and into my eyes, making them smart. The hill-top : I am running in the first five. I see the others as we debouch almost simultaneously from the wood. I look around again : my men are well up, blowing hard. Some have dropped back. I do not see them, and other men have

replaced them. Their light khaki tunics and shorts are splashed, as with heavy drops of rain. So are my own. My sleeves are clammy. Delicious, wonderful bath of animal sweat.

I see below me the deep valley, trees in serried ranks mounting fifteen hundred feet. Almost I could leap to the silver curl of the stream in the chasm. My legs are strong, thews braced. I hurl myself down, jumping from boulder to boulder, the jar of thigh on ribs making the breath exude in sharp dog-like barks. I stumble over tree-stumps hid by fern and undergrowth. I swear. I glissade over the pine-needles, tear the tortuous undergrowth from my path. The lads are following. I can hear their curses and deep breathing, sometimes even feel their hot breath. The fight is in me. I am eager. It is like a battle. I see two other men plugging down beside me to a flank. They are fighting too. I call back to my men. We plunge downwards to the stream. A jagged branch rips six inches of my thigh : the cotton of my shorts waves like a pennant. Hot blood courses down my leg, matting its young hairs, dripping on to my boot. My fingers find it warm. I gloat. A wound. Cascades of sweat mingled with lifeblood.

But I am not tiring. The river, swollen after rains, its course strewn with great boulders, fern and lichen covered. I plunge in. I slip. The torrent grasps me. With myself, it gurgles and laughs. I am up upon a boulder, dripping from head to foot. Those others have failed. I am first across the river : they are seeking for another crossing. I look back. My men are coming pell-mell down the hill-side. I shout to them. The surge of their progress sweeps towards me. We make a living hand-rail, and over the river go ninety-two men. My company has passed. Others struggle with the torrent. Some have gone on. The stream has rebraced my legs with its soft icy massage. I follow my company.

Now up a mountain-side, boulder upon boulder, crag upon crag. Beauteous with massed rhododendrons, green, green undergrowth, and far, far overhead between the highest tree-tops, like gentians, I can observe the unattainable blue of the skies.

Up, I clamber, pull, strain, and claw my way. I pass through the ranks : men panting with exhaustion, some taking a moment's respite, beat. Up ! I go, on strong legs with muscles braced. Above me I still see figures, the pale beige of their uniforms darkened with sweat. I overtake them. I call again to my men.

Again and again. They are pressing in a solid body, a unit. "A" company!

Now I lead them again. The blood is again flowing warm down my thigh. What a scar for all time! The Spartan's mark, better than the slight artificial slices in the face of a German student. And my hands and knees are torn and bleeding. What life! I am filled with it, overflowing.

I run on. We have climbed two thousand feet. Again the panorama laid out: paddy fields, terraced gardens. I cannot catch the leaders. The way is now too short; but my company follows hard, a pack of them, hounds of the chase.

We are together, feet thundering on the turf, breath like snarls. Pity there is no quarry. The winning-post. We triumph! I, third home.

The Pioneer, in commenting on this competition, said, "In the Army in India to-day, there is not a keener regiment in field exercises than the King's Own Scottish Borderers. Since their arrival from Egypt they have taken to the hills like regular hill-men, emulating the Ghurka and Pahari," and in commenting the following week on one of my fights, "It is seldom one's luck to see such determined attacks and hard hitting as this six-round contest produced. Undoubtedly the best fight of the night."

The Regiment in November 1911 was under orders to take part in the Coronation Durbar, but two cases of cholera prevented our going; and we were held up, therefore, under canvas at Barcilly. While there, I received the following letter: "The Central Committee, Coronation Durbar, desires to employ Lieutenant G. S. Hutchison, 1st Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers, in connection with the Durbar." No cholera here; so I packed and fled.

CHAPTER VI

DURBAR

The town of tents—Massed bands—The Investiture—Native chiefs—
Pomp—Fortune tellers—Courage and good humour of His Majesty
—The State entry—Durbar.

THE position of such a Staff Officer was unique. I possessed special permits along all the roads, into every camp and even to the purdahs. I was in charge of the seating arrangements, and after each ceremony it was my duty in conjunction with a Sikh native officer to organize the transport, many hundreds of mule-carts, mostly of the Imperial Service troops, and convey seating accommodation from one place to another. The area under canvas was no less than twenty-five square miles. From the fire watch towers, of which there were five, one at the centre and one at each corner of the camp, the view was extraordinary and incomparable to anything I had ever seen or imagined, before or since.

As far as the eye could see there were tents, all pitched in regular form, each peg being part of a mathematical scheme ; while the spaces in between the different camp areas were laid out in spacious roads and avenues, fountains, lawns, and flower gardens. It was the largest camp the world has ever seen, and the responsibility for all arrangements rested with Sir John Hewett, the Governor of the Central Provinces. Not a hitch occurred from start to finish, a sufficient testimony to the thoroughness of the preparations, whether concerned with railways, telegraphs, postal arrangements, transport, forage, rations, visitors' camps, photography, Press, movement of troops, quartering of natives, and a thousand and one other departments too numerous to mention.

But mention should be made of one of them, namely the film. As compared with modern practice, of which I possess no little experience to-day, filmcraft was in its infancy, but the film, made in colours, of the Durbar which I saw afterwards exhibited in

London, I still consider one of the greatest achievements in the industry. The process was far too expensive to be commercially possible ; but I consider this film should be exhibited on permanent tour throughout the Empire, for not only is it indicative of the might, strength, and variety of the Indian Empire, but it is an illuminating example of British productions.

There is a story that of Lord Curzon's Durbar of 1905, Kitchener remarked that it only required a clown to make a circus of it, though remembering the austere dignity of Lord Curzon, whom I afterwards met at the Foreign Office, I can hardly believe this. But to the dignity, majesty, stateliness, and the deep impression conveyed by the Coronation Durbar of 1911, no such remark could have been applicable.

The Durbar and its associations and ceremonies consolidated the Indian Empire in a far deeper way than was realized at the time. Perhaps the most signal act was when thousands of natives rushed from their seats and stands, joined by troops, to kiss the spot where the Great White Rajah had walked.

There was considerable grumbling on the part of foreign visitors, that they were asked to pay exorbitantly for the privilege of witnessing the ceremonies, but they were paying also for the self-granted, disgusting privileges of cracking champagne and soda-water bottles throughout the most solemn part of the ceremonies. There was, too, some bitterness of feeling between military and civil officials. The civilians were granted every kind of privilege both as to quartering and with special allowances. Even the King-Emperor criticized adversely the arrangements made for his British and Indian soldiers, who bore the heat and burden of exacting ceremonial parades day after day, and spent their nights herded twelve or fourteen in a tent, together with their full dress kit and arms. It was an act of kindness and courtesy emanating from the King himself, that all the troops participating should receive half a month's extra pay.

I was quartered in the massed bands' camp in my own 120-lb. tent. This camp was in charge of three men who have made their mark since the War in military and broadcast music, Somerville, Stretton, and O'Donnell. The band itself contained over three thousand performers, and represented every British and native regiment in India. Each instrument was grouped together whether played by British or native musicians ; and the whole was conducted by Major Stretton with an electric-tipped baton, himself always cool, collected, and sarcastic. The

string section consisted of picked men from my own regiment and from three others ; and we earned the sobriquet of "The King's Own String Band."

I was present on the occasion of the Investiture, standing beside the dais upon which both the King and Queen were enthroned, while Lord Esher called the names of those who were to come forward and receive honour at Their Majesties' hands. "The King's Own String Band," during the proceedings, was playing softly from a tent immediately behind the throne. Suddenly there was a cry of "Fire !" A conflagration had broken out in one of the Queen's apartments. Fires among canvas are disastrous and fraught with the utmost peril to human life. There was a brief moment during which, within the Investiture shamiana, that huge assembly of the Empire's most distinguished servants, with their ladies, might have been seized with panic. But it was at this moment that a drummer from the band stepped through an aperture behind the throne and without the least concern leaned forward confidentially towards His Majesty and broke the tense silence, announcing, "Some mucker's done this on purpose," in the broadest Scots accent. The King-Emperor roared with laughter, so infectious that it immediately communicated itself to everyone present. During this brief moment the pickets got the fire under control without much damage being done. At the termination of the ceremony I was among the few who received the Durbar Decoration, and among those others was Drummer Dalton, who by a swift phrase made the King laugh, and prevented a panic.

Of special interest was the arrival of the native chiefs with their retinues, immediately prior to the Durbar. Special trains one after the other arrived at the Kingsway. Such a scene of chaos in all history can never have been witnessed. Harassed officials and police ; jabbering babus ; domineering officers and visitors ; sweating coolies ; yelling drabis and syces ; struggling women and their children ; rajahs ; nawabs ; petty potentates from Central India ; wild-looking Baluchi chieftains, quaintly dressed retainers from the Shan States ; naked beggars from the bazaars ; horses ; mules ; camels ; donkeys ; bullocks ; carriages ; wagons ; dandies ; tongas and ekkas ; millions of flies ; piles of baggage of every description ; military packing-cases, rifle-chests ; smart American trunks ; tents ; motors ; more vehicles of every description, swathed in wrappings, every imaginary shape and kind of baggage from a giant gilded motor

car, to a roll of dirty blankets and rags. The whole a Babel of sound and a kaleidoscope of colour. Slowly the creaking wagons wended their way from the stations to the various camps, where preparations were busily going forward.

Skilled native gardeners were laying out terraces and balustrades. Designers at work with shells and stones. Lawns and gorgeous flower gardens being constructed. Playing fountains. Workers in wood and marble and stone erecting triumphant arches, walls, railings, pavements, roads. Embroiderers in silk, satins, and cotton, at work on tents and shamianas resembling a permanent palace. Engineers arranging the myriad lights which twinkled along the walls, in the tents, and on the triumphant arches.

As each chief arrived the appropriate royal salutes boomed out from the Ridge where batteries of Horse, Field, and Mountain artillery were stationed. Of the camps all were different in style, in architecture and arrangement, and all so extravagantly gorgeous that they baffle description.

The camp of Kashmir was perhaps the most remarkable. Its front façade about 150 yards long, of dark sheshum wood richly carved with exquisite floral designs of thousands of different panels. The gateway and each end were finished by lofty square towers, also richly carved and crowned and roofed with beaten copper. Within, the tents and shamianas were hung with priceless Kashmir shawls and lace, while the entrance shamiana was furnished in solid gold, the furniture resting upon rugs and mats of marvellous texture, of ancient and rich design.

A servant permitted me to plunge my itching fingers into a wooden box, the value of which was not more than a rupee or two, but the contents of which, blood-red rubies of immense size, was a fortune untold. After having witnessed the supreme dignity and wealth of Kashmir, as displayed at the Durbar, by contrast it is almost trivially stupid to think of Mr. "A."

If one regards the Durbar with the eyes of the twentieth-century cynic, to them it may appear to have been as funny as those other pantomimes which for some stand out as landmarks in memory, the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, and the raid by Joynson-Hicks upon the Arcos offices in Moorgate. The former, as a little boy of seven, I watched from my grandmother's carriage, where we had a privileged position in Hyde Park near to Marble Arch. I was tremendously impressed at the time, and someone bowed to the carriage as the coachman raised his

cockaded hat, and flourished his whip. It must have been the Queen. I had the good fortune to be in the City when the pomp of Scotland Yard was engaged, with a large force of men in blue, dynamiting the commercial offices of the Soviet. I am sure the objective, like that of the Diamond Jubilee or of the Durbar, was to impress the population with the might and majesty of the Imperial Government. That being so, I am agreed that these performances were not without their humours.

But the Durbar, if only because of the enormous concourse of different races, castes, and clans brought together to render homage to the King-Emperor, stands out uniquely. I had the opportunity, too, of seeing native chiefs, statesmen, and others of international fame at close quarters.

Sir John Hewett, the Governor of the Central Provinces, finally responsible for the direction of the Durbar, was a most impressive figure, of massive size and a tremendous driving force. His personality seemed to dominate every department of activity. Beside him, the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, seemed an anæmic personality. The British officials paled before the princely splendour of native maharajahs and other chieftains. In the eyes of adventurous youth, how could Lord Esher compare with the ruling chief of the Shan States, that sphinx-like face, his body clothed from head to foot in beaten gold ! The appearance of the King-Emperor himself, except on the 12th December, was almost insignificant beside the gigantic, fierce-looking chieftains from Baluchistan and the hills beyond Peshawar ; while the uniforms and dresses of British officers and their wives possessed no splendours compared with those from Kashmir or Rajputana. Even the beggars in the streets, with their spots of high colour, seemed to be more a part of this pageant than did the Europeans who took precedence at every function.

Those who captured most my imagination were Colonel Chanda Singh, the polo player, who hit the longest ball with the most marvellous accuracy ever seen on the field ; and his strength was equalled, perhaps, by the daring riding of Motihal. Though on the polo field, where tournaments were played before a hundred thousand pairs of eyes, British cavalymen and natives, men like Leslie Cheape and Captain Palmes equalled in brilliance the Maharajah of Kishengarh and those masters whom I have mentioned. The native chiefs came to the polo ground as if to a tourney of the bygone ages, some of them clad in rich apparel, girt with swords, daggers, and pistols, with their retinue armed

to the teeth with every conceivable kind of weapon from the ancient arquebus to a double-barrelled ejecting sporting gun, and from a giant two-handed scimitar to a modern Italian stiletto.

Others who were as gods before my eyes were Sir Pratrap Singh and the Imperial Bodyguard. In the course of my duties I found myself thrown often beside this gay corps; and I remember conversations with the youthful Maharajah of Jodhpur, a charming boy of some fifteen years and as keen a horseman as was his father, and of Faridkot, another youth who possessed an excellent knowledge of English, including both the slang and oaths which were the military currency of the time. Gay youths questing for romance and adventure.

And then in Delhi there was the fascination of having one's fortune told.

Those familiar with the palmistry of the race-course and of charity bazaars, or who have perhaps sought out a crystal-gazer in Kensington, can form but a poor conception of the business of fortune-telling in the East. Sometimes the soothsayer, seated with legs akimbo before his client on the ground, will take the dust in the palms of his hands, and, as the mechanics of divination, pour it into little heaps to the accompaniment of a melodious sing-song. Others, with quaint ceremonial, will visit and revisit the client several times, sitting with him in silence at eventide, or stealing in upon him while he is yet semi-conscious from sleep in the early dawn. He will affect to offer prayer to the sun, the moon, and the stars; to invoke the spirits of the desert, of the mountains, and of the rivers, while with each visit he is refreshed by gifts received humbly at the hands of the client. One may scoff good-naturedly and distribute gifts, and finally receive at the hands of the seer a character for unimpeachable good behaviour.

One may reflect that this form of earning a livelihood is not even dissimilar from the spoof of "share-pushing" on the Stock Exchange, of bookmaking, or of any of the confidence tricks of the pleasure beach or an English country town on market day. Maybe. But there will be others, members of psychic-research societies and the like, moon-gazers, spiritualists, astronomers, half-wits, and quite a number of sane people also, including scientists, who are not unwilling to testify that the sun, the moon, and the stars in some measure control the destiny of man. Indeed, with so general an acceptance of the theories of atomicity, a

growing belief in reincarnation, and by many also a sneaking fondness for the idea of the transmigration of souls, even those who with superiority scoff at the soothsayer when opportunity presents itself, are not shy of a visit to the modern witch of Endor. .

In Delhi there had congregated the most famous Pundits from all India, and many of the most illustrious came to sit at their feet.

It may not be difficult for a shrewd observer of human nature to guess at the thoughts which are passing through the mind of someone in close contact, especially after that observer has thrown out even the most delicate of hints. This is the strength of the seer of Kensington. He, or more usually she, can make a half-guess at the anxiety or distress, the curiosity and waywardness of human nature, especially that most powerful urge of the affections which brings the client into the parlour.

"A man, tall, fair, with blue eyes." There is always one such in the past, and probably in the present, of every female visitor ; and for the men, "She is fair, with the glint of autumn leaves in her hair": or "She is dark as the raven, tall and slim." It matters not. "Beware !" Though why these warnings are necessary in Kensington has always passed my comprehension. Surely it would be more exciting and romantic for the client, if urged in the language of "the movies," "O.K. Go to it, kid !" And if the soothsayer had better knowledge of human nature she or he would know that that was the message of welcome and encouragement which the client desired, and that he was just bursting to "go to it," even without any obvious encouragement from the other side.

In Hindustan, since life's most tantalizing moments are the genesis, the creed and the spirituality of the Hindu religion, the Pundits found the necessity to cloak with discretion suggestions which might be counted against them as being indiscreet. They possess power. And that is the strange hypnotic power of the organized mind of the East over the frailties and hypocrisies of the West. If the East desires love, it takes it, or, as a woman, offers it freely ; while the conventions of Europe cloak it behind repressions, or prefer to call it by any different name.

The Hindu fortune-teller will sit before his suppliant taking his hands in his own, lightly touching him. He will draw near so that he is knee to knee, and then with his black eyes he will search the face of the sitter, examine its contours, seeking

blemishes in the pupil of the eye, implanting thoughts into the brain by hypnotism, and watching the minute veins palpitate if he is successful in obtaining a reaction therefrom. He can tell the past like an open book : and he can summarize a character in terms of his own custom and philosophy as if counting dice on a board. And sometimes with uncanny skill, or it may be good luck, he can project the future with a certain and miraculous accuracy. One may be inclined to jeer at the spoof ; but it is not infrequently a curious fate which he predicts.

One of the most famous Pundits came directly to my tent, outside which I was sitting, threading his way through a maze of canvas. I did not know him nor had seen him before ; but he passed the tents of many possible and far more wealthy clients. He salaamed, and then inquired whether he might be afforded the privilege of foretelling my destiny. No one could have refused him, a man so earnest in speech, so prophetic in appearance, so dignified in demeanour. He offered prayers, then examined my hands and head. For perhaps ten minutes he sat very close to me, a vacant stare in his eyes, his lips moving inaudibly. This may have been all part of the *prana*. Then he rose, saying he would return. My bearer, Wazir Ali, had seen him and told me he was a good man. I twitted him with having brought the Pundit to me with the object of achieving a commission. This he stoutly denied ; and though when it suited him Wazir Ali was a most pernicious liar, I knew he spoke the truth.

Next morning, when I had to attend a ceremonial parade very early, I awoke to find the Pundit seated on his haunches beside my camp bed. He only said, "After three days, in the evening, I will return. Then I can tell you your destiny."

He came back three days later, just as he said he would, in the evening. I wrote down all he said ; and of each year that he foretold of my life concerning which he had anything to say, it has both happened and developed with infallible accuracy. He foretold, for example, the year of the War, the parts of the body in which I would be wounded ; and, as another example, that in my fortieth year I would drive in a carriage through the largest city in the world amidst the plaudits of the crowd. It happened : as a member of the Lord Mayor's Committee I took part in the Lord Mayor's Procession in the year 1929. I can only observe that in a biography it would be inappropriate to foretell what this Pundit has predicted as to any future year of my life ;

but if it is as happily fulfilled as has been the past, I may indeed be very grateful to the Fates.

Amid a whirl of processions, receptions, and tournaments, the hour of the Durbar itself arrived. On the late afternoon of the day preceding, while supervising the preparations in the amphitheatre I was the happy witness of an event which, I believe, has received, as yet, no chronicle in history. Both the King-Emperor and the Queen desired a dress rehearsal, and with the exception of those on duty the amphitheatre was cleared.

After His Majesty had walked with great dignity from the reception shamiana to the throne under the golden dome at which he would complete the ceremony, he returned to the shamiana in order, with the Queen, to enter his carriage. The royal pages, little boys chosen from the families of the ruling princes, carried the long train of His Majesty ; and as he was returning across the red baize carpet, he began to walk quickly and then to run, with the little pages sliding behind him on the carpet : a fine touch of humour.

Very earnest efforts were made by the politicians, who feared that an exhibition of unrest among the natives and in some regiments in Delhi would lead to a calamity, to dissuade His Majesty from personally holding the Durbar. With rare courage, one which has characterized some of his most important actions in life, the King-Emperor carried through every ceremonial without an alteration of programme. Of his own volition he visited the camp of a native regiment in a mutinous state, and by his personal example won their enthusiastic loyalty.

After the conclusion of the Durbar ceremonial, His Majesty was bubbling over with high spirits and, in the coronation robes, literally danced upon the lawn in front of his tent, exclaiming to the confusion of his ministers, " I have done it : I've done it ! "

The Chief Herald, General Peyton, came forward to him with the warning, " If His Majesty does not go into his tent His Majesty will get sunstroke."

The inclination of His Majesty to thwart the fears and precautions of his ministers was not only a testimony to his physical courage, but to his understanding also of the psychology of his people. At the last moment, before the State Entry into Delhi, an attempt was made to divert the procession from the Chandni Chauk ; and though later the wiseacres tried to cancel the visit

to Calcutta altogether, the King-Emperor walked through its bazaars on foot attended only by his Viceroy.

In the former instance the King rode alone, supported by the Governor-General, the Commander-in-Chief and their staffs ; and in a carriage behind him was the Queen, a picture of elegance and of grace. Within the Fort, Their Majesties were received in impressive silence ; but as they left the Delhi Gate a cry of welcome greeted them. Passing the Jamma Musjid, the procession turned into Delhi's most famous street, the Chandni Chauk : "The moonlight street," perhaps the richest in Asia, lined with the shops of jewellers whose craft is famous throughout the world. The seats beneath the sacred fig trees which shaded the avenue were filled with natives of importance who had put on their richest robes and most splendid ornaments, turbans and caps gleaming with jewels, robes of rich silks in kaleidoscopic colours, and of cloth-of-gold literally stiff with gems.

The King-Emperor was greeted with loud shouts of loyal greeting, but there was a special note in the cries of the crowd gathered at the small mosque of the "Sonahri Musjid." It was here that Nadir Shah had taken his stand on the 11th March, 1739, to watch the butchery of the people of Delhi by his savage Persian troops. Not since this date had a foreign monarch passed down the Chandni Chauk. What a contrast in the two entries, the one that of the conqueror, his sword red with blood, his savage hordes bent upon robbery, destruction, murder, and rapine, and the other that of the ruler welcomed in joy and peace by his people.

The procession following His Majesty was over seven miles in length, and included the Ruling Chiefs from all Hindustan. Notable in this procession of dazzling splendour, and where all called for wonder and applause, were the Jam of Nawanagar, Ranji of cricket fame, in his silver carriage supported upon a solid silver crocodile ; the Rajah of Patiala, around whose neck were the famous ropes of pearls ; and the Begum of Bhopal, an intimate friend of the late Queen Victoria. There were dancing horses, beautiful war steeds laden with gifts, and girt with trappings of gold and silver set with gems ; warriors clad in chain mail and armour ; gaily clad heralds beating drums, blowing great horns and singing. The scene was rather one from the *Arabian Nights* than an experience of this practical workaday world of the twentieth century.

With a position on duty within the shamiana I was a close

witness of the incident in which the Gaekwar of Baroda failed to make proper obeisance to the King-Emperor at the time when the other ruling princes rendered their homage to him. There was a wild outcry against this act of what was considered calculated disloyalty. The Gaekwar, following the Nizam of Hyderabad, India's premier prince, who had bowed deeply before Their Majesties and then stepped from the presence backwards, shuffled before the King, clad in the simplest attire, curtly saluted him as if to an inferior, and sidled off among the waiting princes. A gasp of astonishment came from the throats of the thousands who witnessed such disrespect. The Gaekwar was immediately rebuked and punished by the deprivation of his dignities, and he apologized through the Press at the command of the Governor-General. At the time it appeared to me that he was overcome with nervousness; but certainly his own generosity during the War, and his acts of statesmanship since, have dispelled any suggestion that his acts were those of calculated disloyalty to the King.

It is improbable that there will ever be a repetition of the Durbar, for not only has the unchanging East changed, but even the popular Prince of Wales himself was received, during his Indian tour in 1925, in many districts with frigid hostility. The "Pageant of Asia," like the *Arabian Nights*, is now but part of history.

So we may look again at its scene before it fades for ever.

Following the homage of India's premier princes came the proud procession of Rajput Chiefs, "the gentlemen of Asia," led by the Maharajah of Jaipur, wearing the chief treasure in his house, the most costly necklace in India.

The little ruler of Jodhpur stepped from his place beside the throne to make his obeisance. He was resplendent in dazzling cloth-of-gold, and wore hanging above his right eye a richly jewelled miniature of his grandfather.

So they passed in this impressive ceremony clad in gorgeous brocades and shimmering cloth-of-gold, the Chiefs of Central India, of Baluchistan, of the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay, and Sikkim, far in the northern highlands. Among this glittering procession one figure caught every eye and a murmur of applause rose from the pavilions. This was the Begum of Bhopal, the only woman ruling in India. She was wrapped from head to foot in a robe of gold lacework, her head surmounted by a crown of gold filigree,

The passage of the chiefs occupied forty minutes and the form of their homage was always varied. Some saluted, some bowed deep to the ground, while others kissed it at the King's feet. Some, for reasons of custom, ignored the Queen; some laid their swords at the King's feet. All the emotions were stirred by the sight of these proud chiefs who swept through the throng with hauteur and disdain, and then humbled themselves before a ruling chief to whom alone they have ever bowed their head and kissed the sword.

Following the ceremony trumpets pealed and drums rolled their muttered thunder. Then there entered the arena the stately figure of the Herald, the Royal Standard blazoned on his tabard, attended by the Malik Umar Hayat Khan, a Punjaub magnate of martial bearing, and twelve British and twelve Indian trumpeters on milk-white Arab stallions. They blew loud fanfares on their silver trumpets and then drew up before the throne. In his magnificent voice rolling across the wide arena, General Peyton read the Royal Proclamation, which among other things extended the privileges of the Victoria Cross to the natives of the Indian Army. The Proclamation was repeated by the Malik Umar. Following the Proclamation, cannons roared and the troops outside the amphitheatre fired a *feu de joie* which ran right through the camps to the King-Emperor's pavilions beneath the Ridge.

After the troops were dispersed and all had left the arena there followed perhaps the most striking act in the history of all India. The huge crowd from the amphitheatre descended towards the dais from which the King had walked, and bowing and kneeling kissed in adoration the place where their Emperor had stood but a few moments before.

Other rulers may have been blessed by crowds for delivering them from tyranny and oppression; other kings may have commanded such respect by their imperious demeanour and the power of the sword; but history does not relate of any incident in which a crowd of many creeds, races, and sects, actuated by one impulse and that an impulse of intense devotion and loyalty, fell on their knees, kissing the place on which had stood their Emperor, the living and personal representative of an administration which with all its faults and misunderstandings has brought law and order and the essence of justice to their land.

This day was the focus point of all the Durbar ceremonies. There followed afterwards, on later days, the review of tens of

thousands of British and native troops, one unequalled in the history of the world ; but even this, with all its splendour, pales before the Durbar itself.

During the evenings I spent much of my time in the massed bands' camp, listening to impromptu concerts arranged by Colonel Somerville who while at Kneller Hall contributed so much to military music. He was accompanied by Stretton and the brothers O'Donnell, at that time bandmasters of British line regiments, who since have achieved both fame and popularity as the directors of the orchestras of the B.B.C.

My activities at the Durbar, with its staggering brilliance and the learned society in which I found myself, were but a reprieve, and only served to increase the growing conviction that I could do something better than play the fool on a bicycle, lounge for hours outside an orderly room, or fight with fisticuffs against anybody who would stick up their hands.

Following the Durbar two companies of my own regiment were posted to the Fort in Delhi. Even before the Durbar, either ambition or a "touch of the sun," probably both, had decided for me that an uneventful career as a regimental soldier possessed too few attractions for a young man in a hurry, who had no strings to pull, and who had already found himself at loggerheads with fellow-officers who preferred poodle faking at the club and shooting parties to more serious study. Following the glamour of the Durbar nothing in military life, except a war whose prospect seemed on no near horizon, could ever offer similar attractions, so I decided, perhaps in a moment of perversity, to throw up an Army career and seek a fortune in Australia. Not that at any time I possessed any particular desire for the fortune of finance, but that of power and of opportunity. Whether or not my colonel should have dissuaded me from this step is a matter for speculation. At least of a young man not yet twenty-one he should have inquired whether his parents were aware of what he proposed to do, for in this choice no one questioned me or made any attempt to dissuade me.

Having rejoined the main body of the Regiment at Bareilly I sent in my papers, and within a few days was on my way to Tuticorin, from the Central Provinces, a stifling journey.

Looking back now twenty years, it is not without some regrets that I contemplate, not my resignation from the Army, but its method, which gave rise to all kinds of misunderstandings.

CHAPTER VII

SEEKING A FORTUNE—AUSTRALIA. A FORTUNE IN AUSTRALIA

To Ceylon and Australia—Earning a livelihood—The Brisbane strike—Voyaging round the Cape—Storm at sea—Looking at the underdog—Militia—A. and S.H.—Fort George—Machine-guns.

BUT my hopes were very high and the freedom from petty irritations and the orderly room gave me great joy. From Tuticorin I went to Colombo ; and having some few days before the arrival of the P. & O. which would take me to Sydney, I went inland to Kandy. The fascination of its hanging gardens, one of the wonders of the world, its temples and bazaars, and the presentation of a new religious form, that of Buddhism, were deeply interesting, and all too soon I returned to Colombo and took ship for the land which seemed to hold out such high hopes to migrants.

Sydney Harbour never fails to impress the visitor. As an officer of the Imperial Army I imagined that such prestige would be valuable when I landed in Australia, but I was very quickly disillusioned. I set up in a boarding-house of first-class reputation in McQuarie Street with a fine view over the harbour, and then proceeded at once, since funds were getting low, to seek those opportunities which had been so widely advertised and which had drawn me to Australia's shores.

I was a competent surveyor, but discovered that though I might eventually find work as a chain man for a pittance, it was by no means certain. I interviewed farmers who were willing to employ me as a "jackaroo" in return for food and lodging, a kind of remittance man. I investigated every kind of Government scheme for the settlement of migrants on the land, but it did not appear from the information I was given that I was the type required. My pounds grew less as week after week dragged on ; and I suffered the first humiliation of entering a shop beneath the sign of three balls and pawning first the cups for boxing which I had received in India, and thereafter my gun.

In order to fill in time while I was waiting for something to turn up I began to make water-colour sketches and sold these for a few shillings to the art dealers and the guests in the hotels. Being successful I conceived the notion that I might make designs and paint posters for commercial use, and called upon several printers and newspaper offices. I received four shillings for designing a label for a biscuit tin, and then obtained a commission from the first advertising agent whom I ever met, one Norton, God bless him, who employed me for three weeks making designs for the catalogue of a retail store. I was paid thirty-five shillings a week, a salary which compared favourably with the five and ninepence a day which I had received as an officer of the Imperial Army. But it did not keep me in the respectable security of McQuarie Street ; and I changed my lodging to another boarding-house in which it cost me twenty-five shillings a week for bed and two meals a day. In later years as a director of one of the largest advertising organizations in the world, directing a campaign sponsored by the Commonwealth Government, it has been pleasant to look back upon that day in Sydney when Norton gave me so much encouragement.

While in India I had established some reputation as a singer, having in the days of my younger manhood studied under Walter Wiltshire. In Sydney there was a music-hall at which on each Friday night part of the entertainment consisted in a public voice-trial. A successful turn might receive an engagement and thereafter process through the lesser music-halls of the Commonwealth, but those unsuccessful provided great entertainment for the audience who came armed with peanuts and pelted the stage. One Friday night, therefore, I presented myself for trial. I had decided rather than venture to sing that I would deliver myself of a dramatic recitation. I attired myself as a tramp, in which costume also I hoped to win the sympathy of the audience, who might imagine that the clothing was all I possessed, and delivered myself of an impassioned rendering of "Devil-may-care." My appearance was a tremendous success ; and as an encore I sang "The bold bad burglar" with so much feeling that the management presented me with two pounds. Then, being the first turn, I joined the audience. It was not to be denied its evening of fun ; and every other turn, regardless of its quality, was pelted with peanuts.

Two pounds was the highest money I ever earned in this land of opportunity ; and together with three weeks' pay from the

advertising agent, it kept me in a position of some respectability at my second boarding-house for some weeks.

I was desperately in need of work of any character provided that it would bring in twenty-five shillings a week to fill my belly, and provide a bed by night. In the evening I would attend the theatre and various parties, keeping up some kind of appearance, while by day, in order to satisfy the pangs of hunger, I used to attend a tea booth and restaurant used chiefly by tramwaymen, where for sixpence one could obtain as many cups of tea as one desired, and two courses consisting of meat and vegetables followed by pudding. I believe that the raw material for these excellent repasts came from the back door of the largest hotel in Sydney. Almost literally was I gathering up the crumbs from the tables of my friends.

I had not imagined that in Sydney it would be cold, but coming from the tropics I found the chilly winds in July which came up from the harbour extremely severe. Especially was this so when I obtained a temporary position to load sheep-carasses in the refrigerator of an ocean-going liner, work which lasted me four days. I made various attempts by cable and by letter to withdraw my resignation, but there was no precedence for this request and it failed. I endeavoured then to discover a kindly shipping manager who would permit me to work my passage home, but though this is a facility frequently enjoyed by the heroes of the lighter forms of fiction, it is, I believe, one of the most difficult tasks in the world. At any rate, though kindly disposed, no manager was willing even to try me out as a steward or a deck hand.

Almost at my wits' end I retreated from boarding-house number two and deposited the remains of my baggage in an evil little room in the Woolloomooloo, and proceeded to take my rest in the Domain, the happy hunting-ground of "sand-baggers," tramps, and down-and-outs. It was bitterly cold.

While looking around for some kind of work, and wasting my time standing in queues with others in the same predicament as myself, I had the opportunity of learning what otherwise I could not possibly have experienced, namely the mode of life of the underdog.

For three weeks I lived on a total income of eleven shillings, which I expended with considerable wisdom; and I did not resort to stealing, though I was shown how easy it is to misappropriate property. With nothing else to do I attended

political meetings of every shade of opinion ; and the best friend I had at this time was a Communist who recognized in my easy capacity for self-expression a most desirable ci-devant recruit. Though I was appreciative of his kindness, I could not accept the intellectual superiority which he sought to thrust upon me, but I remained grateful to him that at close quarters I had the rare opportunity of studying a movement which has subsequently shaken all civilization to its very foundations. I loathe it with all my soul.

When it seemed that even of bread there would be no more unless I stole it, Tom Mann declared the great Brisbane strike. I have no doubt that in any case the offer of good wages for my labour would have attracted me hot-foot to Brisbane, but having argued to my satisfaction the whole charter of a communist El Dorado with my friend, and having reasoned it as an absurd and sterile proposal, I went gladly as a strike-breaker to Brisbane. I was paid twenty-eight shillings a day for my services, which varied between riding the streets as a kind of amateur policeman, and unloading ships in the port.

Tom Mann's strikers were determined fellows, and when they got the chance, which was not often, until the arrival of the farmers from inland, gave the strike-breakers a pretty rough passage. Some of them came on board a ship which I was helping to unload and began to throw the blacklegs overboard. I did not myself escape from a ducking, because I went over accompanied by two of Tom Mann's desperadoes, who had attempted to throw me into the water. They had, of course, no intention themselves of joining me, and for all they cared I might have been drowned. I was not, therefore, in the least worried when, as I believe, one of my assailants failed to come to the surface. I still have no regrets, for the brute, not satisfied with violently assaulting me with his boots, when I gripped him with my arms, fastened his teeth in one of them and bit me almost to the bone. But if Tom Mann lost one of his recruits, I succeeded in obtaining fifteen pounds for my services, twelve of which I immediately expended on purchasing my passage to England in a vessel of the Aberdeen Line, the steamship *Moravian*.

I left Australia and Australians with no regrets, though I have since learned my error, for I love them, and found myself in the *Moravian*, a vessel of four thousand tons and antiquated boilers, with a cabin on the promenade-deck all to myself. Such luxury was undreamed of, but if the cabin was good, that was the best

part of the steamship. It wobbled heavily round to Adelaide and then set out across the Great Australian Bight. There was much cargo in the well deck, and as we sailed out into the Bight enormous seas met us across the beam. The vessel rolled alarmingly, sometimes to an angle of forty degrees, and huge seas washed right over her. One of the crew, attempting to rope crates, had his leg broken for his trouble, and a few minutes afterwards an enormous wave carried the cargo and crates overboard. We watched them for a few seconds until they disappeared in the gulf of the waters, swallowed up in a mist of spray. The *Meravian* beat its way round to Freemanble, and was laid up in the harbour during two days for repairs to its engines.

Then it wobbled out again on a sea of glass for the next part of the voyage to Durban. We sailed over this vast sea without sight of land or vessel for eleven days, during which the majority of the passengers broke the boredom with wild drinking bouts. There were two comedians, Herbert Rule and Fred Poplar, the latter in his earlier years also a bruiser. But there were others among the passengers not possessed of the good humours of these two funny men, and they took a violent dislike to my own moods, which expressed themselves in caricaturing the passengers and writing doggerel rhymes about them. One of them, who told us he was a retired Army officer, married to a barmaid, used to expend his surplus energies by throwing beer glasses at anyone with whom he disagreed, and not least at the person of his wife.

But the little humours of this voyage were rudely broken when a most violent storm from the coast of Africa smote the vessel. With each hour it increased in its violence, and the ship rolled, pitched, and corkscrewed in a most alarming manner. All its portholes were closed and locked, and with each roll the decks were swept by the huge waves. The passengers were confined to the saloon, and at every hour a parson on board offered public prayers for the safety of the ship's souls. To add to the alarm, we received news through the wireless that the steamship *Waratah* had turned turtle and had sunk with all hands.

Having painted a passable portrait of the Captain and presented it to him I was more or less a privileged person, and instead of being confined to the saloon and the cabins, I was permitted to be with the Captain on his bridge. If one has any need for pride in British seamanship, the opportunity of being on the bridge of a small vessel with its captain in the height of a storm provides all the necessary ingredients. It was magnificent

to watch the prow of the vessel at one minute dipped in the trough of the seas and then rise from it with a shudder high in front of the vision, while clouds of spray enveloped the bridge and huge waters flowed across its decks ; and then to turn and watch the Captain's face, riding his vessel as an agile and skilled man will ride a bucking bronco. The Captain felt the pulse of the storm, as the trained fingers of a horseman can feel the temper of his mount in the leathers in his hands. The Captain never left his bridge day or night for three days, and on the fourth we steamed into the port of Durban.

Close confinement below decks accompanied often by violent sea-sickness had not improved the tempers of many of the passengers, and as the harbour of Durban welcomed the ship into the safety of her port, there was a rush to the bar by those who had been unable to keep liquor inside them and who discovered now that smooth waters enabled fresh intoxication. The swashbuckler from the Army was among the first to succumb, and two hours before the vessel berthed he had already thrown a glass of beer at his wife and soaked her from head to foot. Then he returned in a fit of drunken remorse to his cabin. Some of us who were sympathetic with this unhappy lady were informed by her that on reaching the port she intended to escape on shore and leave her husband for good. So while some of us occupied ourselves plying the retired officer with more liquor, the remainder assisted his spouse to pack her trunk and prepare to disembark. The ship berthed, and as soon as the gangway had been placed at the ship's side the wife, accompanied by her trunk, rushed down its incline and jumped into a rickshaw.

But the gallant man, sufficiently sober to be suspicious, rushed on deck to discover his wife disappearing. And with a roar like a tiger he charged down the gangway in pursuit. We followed pell-mell after him, and a wild chase began, the little bird as the quarry, with the ex-soldier a hundred yards in her wake bellowing like a bull, and the rest of us offering untold wealth to rickshaw boys to increase their speed and head the husband off. There have been a great number of rickshaw races in Durban or in Colombo, but I doubt if ever one was more exciting than that in the wake of this unhappy lady. The "boys" themselves fully entered into the spirit of the thing, bending their powerful muscles and straining every effort to outrun each other. The wife's rickshaw boy was not very fleet of foot and the husband's rickshaw overhauled her rapidly. Just as he was preparing to

leap out, the foremost in the hunt drew level and headed him off; and as our rickshaws crowded round him we took the lady from her carriage and hurried her to another drawn by a fresh boy. But the soldier was too quick for us, and though he might be willing to lose his wife he leapt into the now stationary rickshaw which she had occupied, and seated himself firmly on her trunk.

So a wife disappeared into Durban, and the husband with some triumph returned to the ship with his trunk. When we sailed the following day, a self-styled officer's wife was not among us, and what happened to her one never knew. But she was an attractive woman of her type and probably she went up to the Rand and found a new husband whom one may hope gave her a better chance than this drunken fiend from the Army, of whom we saw very little during the rest of the voyage.

We turned into Camps Bay at Cape Town and remained there for four days for further repairs to the engines and then went out in fine weather to continue the voyage. The ship turned in at Teneriffe in order to take on a deck cargo of bananas, and both fore and aft, in the well deck and on the promenade, vast bunches of green fruit were piled until they towered high above the taffrail.

As we voyaged towards the Mediterranean a stiff breeze met us across the port beam, and the vessel, which had always rolled appallingly, with this additional top ballast began again to give alarm. The Captain told me that if the rising storm, for such it was, did not abate he would be obliged to jettison the cargo, and I learnt from him also that no insurance company would accept risks for deck cargo. As we entered the Bay of Biscay the storm increased to mountainous fury, even worse than we had experienced in the Australian Bight and in the Indian Ocean. The Captain was taking no risks, and overboard went hundreds of great bunches of bananas, until the decks were wholly cleared of their embarrassment, but even the sacrifice of this cargo did not help the *Moravian* much, and she staggered and lurched in the trough of the seas even worse than did her most inebriated passengers.

At Plymouth the storm was so fierce that the tender was unable to get alongside, so the vessel continued to plough her way up Channel to the estuary of the Thames. We were eight days overdue, and not only had food been reduced to a minimum, but its quality was appalling. There were no affectionate farewells among the passengers, and each one of us turned our backs on our fellows to lose ourselves in London.

I made one exception to this rule, for during the voyage I had more or less adopted three little Irish boys, George, Pat, and Tony Barry, hailing from Cork, aged twelve, ten, and seven respectively, whose mother was wholly preoccupied with a baby a few months old. From that day until the present they have always remained my friends, and from the poverty in which I originally found them, each one of the boys has assumed to a position of dignity and importance in the Union of South Africa. The second boy, serving during the War with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for gallantry in the field, and during his visit to South Africa was presented to the Prince.

Returning to my mother's home, which at that time was at Pinner, I sought to regain my commission, and was received very courteously by General Neville McCready, and though most sympathetic, he again explained that there was no precedent in the Army.

But my experiences among the down-and-outs and vagrants of the Domain in Sydney had awakened in me a sympathy for others in like case. I had nothing in particular to do, except occasional journalism as a free-lance in which I succeeded in earning two or three pounds a week, and I began to prowls about the poorer quarters of London's vast city. If in Sydney I had discovered poverty and hunger, at least it was set off by the geniality of Nature herself and the pleasant sunshine, compared with the drab and dismal streets, disease and ghastly squalor of the greatest city in the world. No one with no practical experience of hunger and of hopelessness could have any idea of the unequal struggle of tens of thousands forced to live from hand to mouth by casual labour or by thieving, in the East End and in South London. If I had nothing to do, at least I could occupy myself with a further study of this problem and with trying to alleviate its miseries.

I followed Lloyd George whenever he spoke in London, and cheered his invective to the echo. I attended meetings of political agitators by the dozen, but discovered them hopelessly divided among themselves, State socialists, syndicalists, anarchists, communists, those who followed the dreary teachings of Karl Marx, and those who expected without a change of human heart that the philosophy of the Sermon on the Mount could, by a stroke of legislation, become part of the economic system of the world.

And then one day I observed an advertisement in *The Times*, requesting the honorary services of a young man willing to contribute them to the secretaryship of a boys' club in Camberwell. Having replied I went to interview Wemyss Grant-Wilson, the originator, founder, and honorary director of the Borstal Prisons. Contact with so fresh, inspiring and lively a mind must always have impressed any who had the good fortune to come in contact with it. After he had shown me round the Hollington Club and introduced me to his colleague in its direction, R. M. Greenwood, the Treasury solicitor, and the late H. G. G. McKenzie, physician and philanthropist, I accepted their proposal to control the activities of some three hundred slum boys for whom they had founded the most progressive and well-organized club in London.

Meanwhile I was supported in my effort to reobtain a commission by Colonel W. D. Sellar, my commanding officer; and the novel suggestion was put to me that I should join the Militia battalion and then compete for a Regular commission at the examination in the following October; but this I was in no financial position to do.

I had reached London on the 17th July; and writing in my diary a week or two later, I recorded that after all "I did not regret having left the Army or those months of waste, of semi-starvation, and of dashed hopes which I spent in Australia, for they had given me that greatest gift of all, at any rate in these times of class antipathy and so-called industrial unrest, a broader outlook of mankind, a better judgment of man and of opportunities, and a knowledge and insight into political creeds. I have formed many new friendships and have gained in experience, and have found a new position, in new surroundings, among new people."

In addition to the Hollington Club I visited the Bradfield Lads' Club in Peckham, and in connection therewith formed one of the first Scout troops in England, and conducted a gymnastic display before Prince Alexander of Teck. The Hollington Club, unlike the Bradfield Institution, was unconnected with any religious body. Its magazine for March 1913 recorded: "Mr. Hutchison brings a record of many achievements in many fields of activity, and in many parts of the world, and if he can infect our younger members with his energy we shall presently be the most progressive club in Europe."

I can look back nearly twenty years upon those early en-

deavours, and can visit men with their own families, some of them second-generation members of the Club, who in those days came from one of the poorest districts in London, were without seats to their trousers and even without shirts to their backs. These through the services, medical, educational, and not least that of environment provided by the Club, have risen to positions of prosperity and self-esteem. Some are in the first ranks of the Civil Service, another a prosperous solicitor, and yet another a well-known architect. The buildings of the Club are unmatched by any other in England, and have largely been provided for from the contributions of the members themselves. No boy is accepted for membership after he has passed the age of eight years, and this is a rule from which there has never been any departure. Its older members are now well past forty. The membership of the Junior Club is limited to three hundred, who pass at the age of seventeen to the Senior Club in a different building ; and of the hundreds who have passed through it, except through migration abroad or outside London, only a very few have discontinued their membership.

I frequently spoke from public platforms urging the public-school class to accept the privileges and duties imposed by their birthright and environment, and to contribute their services in the field of social work, so that by their personal example and conduct they could create for the masses an environment from which a reproduction of cultured life can mature. My enthusiasm ran extraordinarily high, and I pestered the politicians to support a National Housing Bill ; but it has taken nearly twenty years for any party to produce a policy which has Slum Clearance as its objective. I steeped myself in Bernard Shaw, Chiozza Money, Lecky, and Carlyle ; and recorded in my diary, " It seems to me that no party in the House of Commons has really the interest of the people at heart. There is little honesty in politics, so little self-sacrifice, so few principles, so few strong men, so few leaders. That is why it seems as if there is little chance for genuine reform, the real spade-work under our party system. Such reforms as we get are only putting disinfectants on a dung-heap. Such legislative spade-work as a National Housing Bill, technical education, a strengthened Alien Act to keep British work for British labour, and embracing a heavy poll-tax on all aliens living in the country, a minimum wage for all classes of labour, and income-tax graded on a sliding scale, so that all classes would contribute a proportionate share

to the upkeep of the country. These reforms would perhaps do something to break down the barriers of class prejudice."

My age was twenty-two and I recorded, "My dream is to stand as an Independent Labour Candidate in a great industrial centre."

But though one might delight in dreams and fancies, it was continually impressed upon me that I must not be content with gathering a few shillings a week as a journalist, and must make a career ; so I accepted the invitation of the colonel commanding the 3rd Battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and in April 1913 was gazetted as a Lieutenant and joined the 93rd at Fort George, close beside the village of Ardesier, the home of my ancestors. I did not fail to note that efficiency, *esprit de corps*, and discipline in the Battalion was below the standard of the K.O.S.B.s, while ill-feeling between some of the officers ran very high. One of them was placed in Coventry because he desired to marry a lady apparently disapproved, and another who had promised to be his best man at the wedding was joined to him in this punishment. Fort George is set on a bleak promontory miles away from any town and from any form of amusement for the troops, which without doubt accounted for the general feeling of unhappiness pervading the Battalion. It is not unfair to remark, therefore, that until the appointment of Major H. B. Kirk to command, with Gervaise Thorpe as Adjutant, the Battalion, despite individual gallantry, was not highly successful. Kirk, commanding a brigade, was killed in 1917, a man of rugged type, most firm but full of human sympathy ; and Thorpe, now a Major-General, was, as he still is, a gentleman of singular charm, original in mind, with an intellectual horizon which rose far above the doings of Corporal X, and the latest smutty story, or potting at partridges, though he can glory in the hunting field.

Kirk was in 1913 commanding the Depot and I had joined the Reservists at Stirling in July for training with the Battalion at Jamestown beside Loch Lomond. There I instituted a Highland Race, similar in principle to those which I had organized in India. In full marching order we had to run three miles over hill and down dale, through heather and bracken ; and I had the honour of coming in first, with my company far ahead of the averages of the rest of the Battalion. From Jamestown I went to a school of musketry at Hythe as a member of the 152nd Machine-Gun Party. The machine-gun in those days was in its very infancy ; and with the exception of tactical examples from

the Russo-Japanese War and illustrations of the hotchkiss and pom-pom in South Africa, there was very little upon which the instructors could draw.

But I was immensely impressed by the fire-power of these weapons, and infected with the enthusiasms of that small body of pioneers, George Lindsay, Sommerville, and Leyland, whose foresight in the teeth of the greatest opposition subsequently led to the formation of the Machine-Gun Corps, a battalion of which I afterwards commanded. I wrote copious notes on machine-gun organization. Without a thought as to a world war, I was immensely impressed with the fire-power and accuracy of machine-guns, as well as with their invulnerability as hostile targets compared with lines of individual infantry men, the success of whose fire could only be secured by individual leadership and control.

At the end of the course, in which I received one of the rare First Certificates, the wanderlust again seized me. My military service had detached me from my enthusiasms in South London, and I decided again to seek some other fortune and fate on the outskirts of the Empire.

I found myself, therefore, as a recruit for the British South Africa Police, but in offering my services refrained from informing the Chartered Company that I held a commission in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

I was immediately accepted ; and in October, on board a Union Castle liner, sailed back again to South Africa.

CHAPTER VIII

IN THE HINTERLAND. IN A LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

British South African Police--Troopers--Founding the Rhodesian Cadets--Intelligence Service--A motor tour through Rhodesia--Portuguese East Africa--Livingstone--First Cadet Camp at Gwelo--Success of training in citizenship--War clouds--Declaration of war--Steaming without lights--Home.

I CANNOT imagine a more delightful trip than that to South Africa in one of the Union Castle's magnificent vessels.

My spirits were irrepressibly high with the prospect of visiting a new land. But it was more cautiously advertised than was Australia for the opportunities which it offered to emigrants. Indeed, those without a substantial capital sum behind them were urged by the Rhodesian Administration, if of suitable type, either to join the Police and thus obtain a knowledge of various districts and opportunities, or to settle as a student for at least two years with a farmer. "Go into the Hinterland!" had commanded that greatest pioneer of African development, Cecil Rhodes. And for the country named after him I entrained at Cape Town. The railways of the Union are magnificently equipped, and compare very favourably indeed with those great systems over which I had travelled in Egypt and the Sudan, in India and in Europe; and far more favourably than those of Australia, where due to inter-State jealousy, the railway gauge, for example, of Victoria was different from that of New South Wales.

My fare to Salisbury had been paid by the Rhodesian Government, and I had left London with five pounds as pocket money. By the time I had reached Mafeking, I had not a penny-piece left with which even to purchase cigarettes, and the morrow would be Christmas Day. I occupied a carriage with a diminutive Jew by the name of Cohen, who told me that he kept a jewellery shop in Salisbury. I was quite frank with him concerning my penniless state, and most generously he produced a golden half-

sovereign, advising me to enjoy my Christmas, which we shared together in the train. God bless Cohen ! for when I arrived in Salisbury I was able to hire a Mashona boy to carry my valise to the Police Camp on the outskirts of the town.

I was the only recruit arriving, and having been peremptorily ordered to put my kit in a bell tent, I began to take stock of the situation. It had been raining heavily and over the floor of my tent was a film of grey mud, some inches deep. I was extremely hungry, so when a trumpet at six o'clock announced the evening meal I hurried over to what was known as the skoff kia. The police of the Depot were already seated in force attired in khaki drill slacks and shirt-sleeves. They received me somewhat coldly, but I managed to squeeze into a seat on a wide trestle. Mashona boys then carried in great "dixies" filled with a kind of soupy stew. There was a roar of rage from the policemen and a great banging of tin mugs on the bare board. But when Major Cashel, the Depot Commander, entered the kia, the scene was of that meek discipline usually associated with an English police force.

I was closely interrogated by two of the corporals as to what I was, what I had been, and more as to what I had done. This latter for the reason that there was already in the force a number of officers who had held Regular commissions and had come to the Police to escape from the sins of failing to pay their mess bills, or having become engaged to be married to some lesser beauty of the variety stage, had incurred parental displeasure, or merely had gone broke. Having done none of these things I was an object of especial interest, and was taken under the wing of Corporals Harnetty and McCormac, both of the Royal Dragoons, the former of whom won a commission in his regiment during the War, and the latter, who rose to the rank of Major, commanded a machine-gun company and has since published his first novel, *The Valley of Mist*, which he dedicated to myself.

The following day I appeared before the great Jimmy Blatherwick, the super-Sergeant-Major of the Police. There was never a better sergeant-major, never a better father of recruits, never a better riding instructor, never a better parade soldier. He liked both my appearance and my record, and I was told that I need not attend any of the recruit drills in riding, musketry, or foot parade, so I waited for my uniform to be served out.

With nothing in particular to do, I was standing one day at the shoeing-forge, when I recognized one of the smiths, black

with dirt and smeared with sweat, one Ingpen, a great horseman and rider to hounds who had been in the Royal Horse Artillery. I remember sitting in his room in the Piccadilly Hotel while he sold his kit, gold lace, top-boots and all, to a Yid from Covent Garden for fifty pounds. That was the last I had seen of him for some years, and here he was as a shocing-smith. We fell round each other's necks and from that moment I joined the small select coterie of soldiers, who incidentally were also the backbone of the Police.

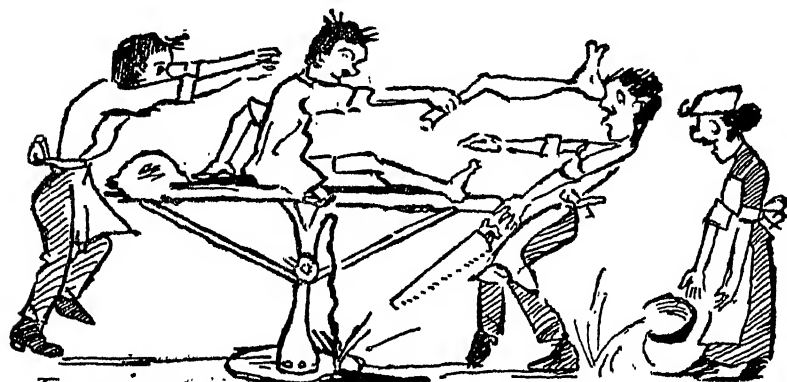
We were paid on Fridays, and drew a few shillings, the balance of our pay being taken in pink coupons, which served as credit at the canteen, and as gambling slips also. The Police were tremendous gamblers, and though during the evenings of most days of the week we would sit down and play respectable bridge, on Fridays "banker" was the great game. One night some cunning rascal rigged the gas jets, so that instead of the canteen lights being extinguished at ten they went out suddenly a quarter of an hour before the usual time, while play was at its height and stacks of silver were on the table. This rogue with his confederates then gathered up the blanket, used as a covering for the table, and ran off with a sack-load of money.

On duty, the discipline of the Police was extremely severe, and in consequence the standard of turn-out a very high one. No one in Salisbury had any particular love for the Police although we kept their homes safe and provided most of the sport in the town, and we were left entirely to our own devices for amusement. Among the farmers, however, the attitude towards the solitary policeman riding the boundaries and preventing trouble among the natives was always one of warm welcome.

I had only just passed my examinations in law and in the Police ordinances and was ready to be posted to one of the stations, when I was thrown heavily from an unridable horse which I had tried to master, and was very severely wounded. With a meanness which might have characterized a less efficient service, the principal medical officer attempted to evacuate me as being unfit, and to return me to England. But I was quite obdurate that I remained the responsibility of the Rhodesian Government, having been injured in its service. I was sent for, therefore, one night and ordered to report at the public hospital, a low-lying, ramshackle affair, with its native ward next to that in which I was placed. I was duly doped and the chief medical officer operated on me at nine o'clock at night. During all my life,

even in the Casualty Clearing Stations of Flanders, I cannot recollect greater discomfort than I experienced in this hospital ; and I was grateful to be discharged.

Within a week, however, of being back on duty, the wound broke and a huge balloon from the inner wall of the stomach bulged out beneath my shirt. I privately consulted two young doctors who had just arrived in Salisbury from the medical schools. One of them had been the anæsthetist during my operation, and told me frankly and immediately that he had observed that a complete mess of the job had been made.



The patient's revenge.

*A dream in Hospital ;
Salisbury.*

He stated that for the honour of his profession he himself would operate, with his colleague in attendance, at a different hospital.

I returned to camp requesting to appear before the Commandant-General. I told him the facts, and had the opportunity also to inform him of my previous service and of the fact that, having obtained a year's leave of absence, I still held a commission in the Militia of Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. Mackenzie Edwards, the Commandant-General, came from just across the water at Cromarty from my own ancestral home ; and he immediately undertook at his own expense to send me to Johannesburg for an operation, prior to appointing me as his own Personal Assistant. But I accepted the invitation of the two young medical men, one of whom, Huggins, is now the foremost physician in Rhodesia, and I was one of the first inmates of the magnificent new hospital erected in Salisbury. I was placed in a private ward and received regular visits from Colonel

and Mrs. Edwards, as well as from the delightful members of one of George Edwardes' touring companies, who were playing in the Salisbury Theatre. How well I remember the sweet Russian princess—Olga Elastik Tobacco Tetchewska !

Within three weeks the mess had been cleared up, and I found myself sitting at a desk in the Commandant-General's office as his Personal Assistant, seconded under the Colonial Office from my own regiment with the rank of Lieutenant.

Opportunity had come.

In the Commandant-General's office was centred not only the control of the B.S.A.P., the finest police force in the world, but also all the volunteer regiments, forming the second line defence of the Territory. My earlier experiences had contributed to me an enthusiasm for work among the citizens of youth ; and since my opportunity had arrived, I dashed into Colonel Edwards one morning and asked his permission to form a cadet corps in Southern Rhodesia. Already the schools contributed some form of military training, but they were unorganized ; and although the Volunteers smiled upon their efforts with friendly eyes, yet they were no part of the Defence Force of the country.

I had all the facts at my finger-ends ; and while the Commandant-General approached the Administrator and obtained the necessary powers to make grants and to lend volunteer officers and warrant officers for instructional purposes, I sat in my office designing uniforms for both senior and junior cadets, and dividing the territory into military districts, so that each would provide a battalion. Mr. Brady, the chief education officer of the territory, who had served in the South African War, and during the Great War served also with great distinction in the Rifle Brigade, gave me his enthusiastic support, and he carried with him the head masters of the schools. Chief in his enthusiasm, and military capacity, also, was Lewis Grant, head master of the High School in Salisbury, the capital town.

Within six weeks the fiat had gone forth that the Southern Rhodesian Cadets were an integral part of the Defence Force of Rhodesia, and Lieutenant Hutchison was appointed the first Adjutant, in addition to his duties as Personal Assistant to the Commandant-General.

The material provided by Southern Rhodesia was of such fine quality that I had very little difficulty in bringing the various schools into a comprehensive scheme of training and administration. The High School in Salisbury in itself produced almost



RHODESIAN YOUTH—HARD AS NAILS, BORN TO THE SADDLE, CRACK RIFLE SHOTS ALL

The author, as their First Adjutant, makes Empire history.

a battalion in strength and had added to it that of Umtali, the outpost on the edge of Portuguese East Africa. Its N.C.O.s, boys of fifteen to seventeen years of age, veritable hot-house plants, were equal in capacity and in military virtues to any of those of the line regiments with which I had served. Buluwayo produced two battalions, one from the Milton High School, and the other from St. George's Catholic School, between them there being intense rivalry.

Another battalion was formed from independent companies of the schools from the small towns of Plumtree, Enkeldoorn, Gwelo, and Hartley. That from Enkeldoorn was composed wholly of Dutch boys, as hard as nails, who could support life by chewing string, and each one of whom was a marksman with the rifle.

No work ever invited my higher enthusiasm ; and although perhaps I did some most outrageous things by issuing ordinances off my own bat without consultation with the Chief Staff Officer or with my General, with excellent good humour Major Murray and the latter gave me their unqualified support. And if, in equipping my army, I imposed a severe strain on the Quartermaster's department, Major "Tubby" Masterman, among the foremost who have made Rhodesian history, blessed my work and permitted me to beg, borrow, and steal, issuing thereafter the necessary requisitions and permits to cover my misdeeds.

The successes of this first enthusiasm led me to the discovery that at the Military Headquarters there was no Intelligence Department, and neither exchange of information nor co-operation between the British Military Headquarters in the Territories bordering Rhodesia's vast expanse. Without such a service, there might be, for example, a native rising in Nyasaland which would swamp across the border into Northern Rhodesia, whereas by well-timed advice the Barotse Police could be assembled to render aid to the King's African Rifles, and to protect Northern Rhodesian interests. Bechuanaland, whose frontiers border those of the Union and of Southern Rhodesia, might rise in revolt without any cohesive policy between the military forces of the Union and those of Rhodesia.

Again I made my suggestion to the Commandant-General, offering to him a complete military survey of Southern and Northern Rhodesia, noting the tactical weaknesses of the Territory, making suggestions for the concentration of troops by rail in defence of any point in the Territory. I wrote copious

notes on the strength and activities of von Lettow Vorbeck's forces in German East Africa, and those of the Portuguese in the east and in the west. I noted the possibility of the Germans from South-West Africa thrusting up the narrow wedge of their territory which terminates on the Zambezi River, twenty-two miles from Livingstone, and thereafter joining forces with von Lettow Vorbeck; and I observed the spread of Mahommedan teaching by emirs from Northern Africa whose objective was a Pan-Islam movement through Africa; and other subjects of kindred interest.

This memorandum, well supplied with maps, was sent out from the Commandant-General's office to Pretoria, Livingstone, Blantyre, and to the War Office; and I found myself, in addition to my other duties, with the appointment of Intelligence Officer.

So important did this work appear to be, in view of the reverberations and rumours of war in Europe, that the Commandant-General decided during February, March, and April of 1914 to make an extensive tour of the Territory in order to obtain first-hand knowledge of the quality of the Police Defence posts, to inspect both the Volunteers and Cadet mounted and infantry regiments, and to study the tactical possibilities and difficulties at first hand. Both as his Personal Assistant and as Intelligence Officer I was selected to accompany him on a tour of hundreds of miles by motor car and by rail throughout Rhodesia.

Four men whom I have served and with whom I have been in the closest association during my life, have won my whole-hearted devotion. Among these four, the others being Wemyss Grant-Wilson and my Divisional Commander, Sir Reginald Pinney, and Sir John Samuel, was Mackenzie Edwards, who for his war services received the honour of knighthood. I was so absorbed by my loyalty to him that I literally cleaned his boots, and after a tedious journey across the veldt by motor car used to drag the clinging field-boots from his spindly legs when he was too exhausted even to stand on his feet.

The interest of our motor journeys was profound; but in their execution the passage was more tedious even than that of my trip in the *Moravian* across the Bay of Biscay. Rhodesia knew no roads, and in those days, also, motor transport was practically unknown. The car used by us was an immense Maudslay, which had served the Duke of Connaught in a recent



STUCK IN THE UMSHAGASHI RIVER
Colonel A. H. M. Edwards, the Commandant-General of the
Rhodesia Defence Force, on a tour of inspection.



DRIVING THROUGH VIRGIN BUSH IN PORTUGUESE
EAST AFRICA

South African tour. I cannot testify too highly to the skill of its driver. We bucketed along through the bush, leaping, bounding, and skidding, with the activity of a gazelle. The driver seemed to know instinctively when the car was going to leave the surface of the soil, made hard by mimosa roots or by rocks, and plunge into a sand-vlei. He would accelerate suddenly, and the car would bound into a trough of sand, throwing up a great wave of dust, its wheels screwing and churning in the soft sub-soil, until we emerged again on to the hard track. We used to dash at rivers, and cross the swollen spruit in similar fashion. But we were not always fortunate.

While going to Tuli, through a district studded with wild game, antelope of all kinds, lions, zebra, and giraffe, the car became axle-deep in a mud-vlei, and I had to walk four miles to a native kraal and seek aid of a dozen oxen and native drivers to drag the Maudslay out, an involuntary halt which kept us in blazing sunshine for eight hours. We stuck firmly for three hours in the Umshagashi River ; and again in the Elephant Pits, and might have been there now, for it is in a district reputed to be possessed of spooks, ghosts, and evil spirits, and the native will make a circuit of forty or fifty miles in order to avoid it.

More than one policeman on the lonely trail has lost his way in the Pits and has died of thirst. Luckily we succeeded in extricating ourselves ; but a police officer, Lieutenant Pitcairn, was not so fortunate a week or two later. Had it not been for the self-sacrificing courage of my friend, McCormac, who went to search for him and with great gallantry stuck to his quest, having been two days without water, finally observing a group of vultures waiting for life to leave their quarry, the bones of Pitcairn would have joined those many others who have never escaped from the Elephant Pits.

Our first tour of inspection was in the Victoria district. We started from Gwelo and went by car to the gold mines at Umvuma. The success of this enterprise is probably best stated by the fact that its one hotel is possessed of a bar twenty-two yards long, which just provides elbow room for well-paid and thirsty miners. The district is occupied by Mashona, who give little trouble.

One day we stopped for tea at the house of the Native Commissioner in Chilimanzi, and were introduced to a Mashona boy who combined the activities of doctor, detective, policeman, judge,

jury, executioner, and sexton. He wore a kilt, a top-hat with a feather in it, and a police-whistle.

After visiting Charter, Ndanga, Victoria, and Tuli we returned to Salisbury; and from there went to Umtali to witness the combined manœuvres of Police and Volunteers. Here we were the guests of Major St. John, a very able and distinguished officer. From Umtali we journeyed to Maccuece, in Portuguese territory, and were the guests of one Austin King, the uncrowned "King" of Mozambique. This territory provides some of the finest farming districts in all Africa; but its administration by the Portuguese, whose officials were indolent and corrupt, was a blot upon Western colonization. The natives had a profound contempt for the Portuguese officers, the majority of whom had "gone native" and were interested only in making profits from the sale of intoxicating liquor at famine prices. The chief difficulty of our police at Umtali was in competing with the after-effects of the Portuguese liquor shops on a native population. A running sore in the minds of all Rhodesians is that this narrow territory, possessed of the only port, Beira, for the export of Rhodesian produce, remains in the incompetent hands of the Portuguese.

One day we made a trip with Austin King through the dense undergrowth of forests to the Revue River where in a clearing had been erected an enormous dredger. We climbed into its interior, and witnessed the washing of alluvial gold from the mud of the river bottom. Great lumps of this tantalizing yellow metal slid and rolled down a wooden incline in a stream of fresh water; and to my eyes the sight was almost as exciting as had been that of handling ropes of pearls in a tent of the Maharajah of Kashmir.

Returning from the beauties of Umtali, set like a jewel amid the high, forest-covered Penhalonga hills, we took the train north to the Victoria Falls and to Livingstone. The spray of the Falls can be seen as a tower in the air for some twenty miles away; and at the station we alighted and put up for two days in the hotel. I have seen Niagara; but magnificent as is this torrent of water, it cannot compare with the setting of the three giant Falls of Victoria, cascading and tumbling into a deep cauldron not fifty yards across. And to add to the attractions of the Falls there is a permanent rainbow, brilliant in its colouring by day, and pale and translucent by moonlight. I believe it is the only moonlight rainbow in the world. We walked across the railway

bridge which crosses the Falls ; and after a picnic with the police officers on the magnificent reaches of the Zambezi above the Falls we continued to Livingstone.

At Livingstone we were the guests of the Northern Rhodesian Police. With the exception of British officers this force is recruited wholly from natives, and administers and controls the whole of this vast territory, with its principal posts in Livingstone itself,



at Kasama, Fife, and Abercorn on the frontier of German East Africa, at Kasempa near the Belgian Congo border, and at Lealui, the outpost on the Angola border. The men of the force are drawn almost exclusively from the Barotse tribe, whose king, Lewanika, a noted Loyalist, had attended the coronation of King Edward.

I had the pleasure of visiting his sister, a great African character, a woman of immense age and of stupendous size. Literally,

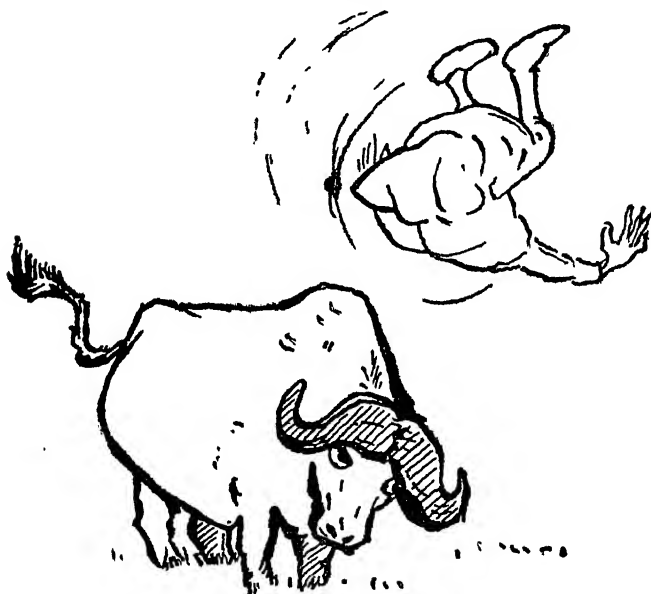
she inhabited a Victoria carriage which had been brought back from London for her use by Lewanika ; and she was reputed never to have stirred from this unique throne on wheels from the day of its arrival in Livingstone. She is probably the dirtiest old woman I have ever seen in my life, and her clothes, so we were informed, and so it appeared from their fashion, having come from Bond Street, were those in which she had lived since 1902.

Both the native commissioners and police officers, as well as the farmers throughout the territory, were men of the very best type, and the administration of the territory was most ably conducted by Colonel Stennet, a powerful and aggressive man.

The lonely life lived by the police officers probably accounted, shortly after our visit, for a most extraordinary and deplorable, though sad, lapse on the part of a distinguished officer of the Police. He was a man of peculiar brilliance living a Jekyll and Hyde existence. As a hobby he explored every conceivable permutation and combination of sexual delight. As, in his organization of the police posts, he had schemes of group defence and of co-operation between posts, so also in his hobby he carried out his excesses in individual and in group arrangement, and kept a careful record of his achievements and experiences. Without the knowledge of his brother officers he had conducted these explorations for several years, until the native bandmaster of the Barotse Police made a complaint to the Colonel that though he had no personal objections to the use of one of his wives by this officer, he must draw the line when use was made of a number of them in combination at the same time. The editor of the Livingstone newspaper heard rumours ; but before a grave scandal developed, the officer was permitted, I consider, with some sympathy for a man suffering from medical disorder, wisely, to make his way to Beira and to disappear. Rumour had it that he had joined Hector MacDonald in China ; and certainly there was evidence from within Manchuria that officers, possessed of high ability during 1913 and 1914, were organizing the army of the Manchu War Lords.

We returned to Salisbury in order to arrange for the first cadet camp. *The Rhodesia Herald* in a leading article stated : "The Government is to be congratulated upon its decision to organize this camp, and we hope that the good results will be so apparent that it will be possible to hold similar encampments every year. The expense, of course, is not inconsiderable, but having regard to the importance of the cadet movement and the

future defence requirements of Southern Rhodesia, the expenditure may fairly be considered to be reproductive in every sense of the word. It is certainly worth while inculcating lessons of discipline, manliness, and practical patriotism in the youth of the country, and from the physical point of view alone the ten days' active life in the open should prove beneficial to the youngsters. In the draft Defence Ordinance it is laid down that 'all boys between the ages of twelve and seventeen years who,



Beware buffalo !

with the consent of their parents or guardians, have enrolled as members of a Cadet corps or company shall be liable to undergo an annual prescribed course of peace training, and shall for this purpose be assembled in such places and at such times as may be ordered, to be instructed in physical exercises, military formations, rifle shooting, signalling, and such other exercises as are prescribed.' The Ordinance further provides that 'a Cadet who has undergone the prescribed course of instruction for any one year, and passed the prescribed tests, shall be reckoned as an efficient Cadet for that year, and if he is reckoned efficient for not less than three years, and his conduct under instruction in Cadet training has proved satisfactory, he shall be entitled, on attaining the age of seventeen, to receive a certificate of efficiency.

Holders of such certificates may, with the approval of the Commandant-General, be transferred to the Active Force, as trained men.' . . . In a country where Europeans live among coloured races character counts more than anything else. The supremacy of the whites will last as long as they possess superior morale, and no longer."

As Adjutant I was sent on ahead to lay out the Camp, to which train-loads of boys began to arrive from all over Southern Rhodesia on the 25th June, 1914. Not only did we engage in military exercises, with spirited attacks upon the kopjes, but the inter-school gymnastic and boxing tournaments were held in the Camp, as well as rifle competitions on the police ranges. The Administrator, Sir William Milton, visited the Camp and complimented the Cadets on behaving as steadily as "a regiment of regulars." Colonel Edwards permitted me to conduct the whole of the arrangements throughout. The *Rhodesia Herald* recorded that, "The boys had to thank Lieutenant Hutchison for the great deal he had done in the general movement. They were fortunate in having him as their head. Not satisfied with the morning's exertion the boys prevailed on Lieutenant Hutchison to have another 'brush' in the afternoon. After dinner they started boyish games, into which Lieutenant Hutchison entered with possibly the most boyish spirit of the lot. It is not surprising that he is so popular with the youngsters, as while compelling them to perform their duties as soldiers he enters into and assists them in their amusements."

I was immensely proud of the success of the Camp, to which the railway service ran special trains on one day so that the parents could see for themselves how much good the movement was doing for their sons. Since that date an annual camp has been held; and the War Office, appreciating the fine quality of the material and the excellent training given in this active Cadet Force, has taken it under the Imperial wing, and gives annually two nominations to Sandhurst for members of the corps.

I am much more than fully satisfied with having been the originator and designer of this excellent fabric as part of the woof of Empire.

June passed all too quickly, and July arrived with war clouds threatening on the horizon. We were all kept very busy in the office both with the new Intelligence Service and in bringing Volunteers up to a higher state of efficiency. Changes were made in their Command and Adjutancy, creating much heart-

burning ; but within a bare month the Rhodesian regiments were to be in the field and the nation mobilized for defence.

Nothing reflects higher credit upon the Cadet Force than that when the Volunteer regiments and most of the police had been mobilized for defence, and then despatched to both German South-West Africa and against von Lettow Vorbeck, the Cadets furnished the guards and fulfilled the functions of the Defence Force among hundreds of thousands of natives, Matabele and Mashona, who might perhaps have seized upon such an opportunity for revolt or inter-tribal disturbances.

It has become fashionable since the War to subscribe to the doctrine of pacifism ; and the fashion has been set chiefly by woolly-minded politicians who escaped from the War behind a camouflage of conscience. The doctrine has been fanned to the



fever-heat of a crusade by some journalists, who in a fit of remorse for years of an ill-spent life, have found it necessary to contribute the fiction about the War.

The achievements of a national cadet force among an Australian and Rhodesian population is more than sufficient proof of its adequacy in producing good citizenship. Though the Boy Scout Movement has contributed largely towards this end, it does not supply the national service rendered by compulsory cadet training. When I reflect on Rhodesia's magnificent young manhood, boys of fifteen and sixteen standing six feet in height, clad in shorts and short sleeves, bronzed, alert, manly, and compare these sprightly types with the hangdog, weedy youth of any English industrial city, I only wonder at the lack of courage and foresight in our statesmen which has delayed them in instilling a compulsory national service of physical training, if only to sustain and improve the physique of the race.

I can take names at random from my young Rhodesians, van Rooyan, Sonny Ashburner, Ricketts, Myburgh, Rogers, Gibbs,

Napier, Judson, who have assumed positions of importance in the administration or agricultural direction of their own country, and compare these with the unhappy lads of the mining districts which I know. I, at least, am ashamed that though the taxpayers' money is poured out upon education, our legislators are so short-sighted that they will not spend the little money which alone can produce a physical vehicle capable of assimilating the education provided. The Boy Scout Movement exists on charitable contributions mostly raised from penny concerts; and the Cadets in the year of grace, 1930, have been deprived of the Government grant which made their survival possible. So while two million persons idle, in receipt of the State grant known as "the dole," their children and hundreds of thousands of others grow into citizenship without any sense of form, of order, with an ill understanding of good companionship, with little appreciation of their own countryside, and without any conception of a citizen's duty. No doubt the degradation of British citizenship is satisfying to the international renegades who seek to debase our own country to the level of the peoples of Eastern Europe.

During early July, I took out the senior cadets from Buluwayo for camp and exercise in the Matoppo Hills, and although the nights were bitterly cold, we went as Spartans without canvas or blankets and slept huddled close among the rocks, while the sentry fanned the embers of a vast fire. It was tremendously inspiring, with these lads, English and Dutch, to "play baboon" among the kopjes, and to stand on the World's View, beside the grave of Cecil Rhodes, set on the highest hill, and gaze across the vast lands of his Africa. Below us were laid out the rich farms of Matabeleland, waving mealies, citrus groves, orchards, and tobacco fields, and far in the distance the hinterland of virgin forest and field awaiting the pioneer's axe and the plough of the farmer.

Following that camp of glorious memory I returned to Salisbury to produce at the Grand Theatre the *Musical Mummies*, a variety show which we had been rehearsing for some months. I was responsible for the scenery and effects and for the posters also. The principal adornment of our troop was Wilfred Bussy, who later with his brothers attained to a position of eminence in Fleet Street. My own role was that of Narrateur, and for three days I assisted in moving the citizens of Salisbury to tears and to laughter.

But we were very busy in the office with military organization ; and though, on the 31st July, I had time to attend the Games and Ball of the Caledonian Society, and with the Senior cadets of Salisbury to spend a delightful week-end with Major Cecil Shaw, a fire-brand who had retired from the 9th Lancers and farmed with military aggressiveness and efficiency, we all felt as we read the cables from home that war was imminent.

On Wednesday, 5th August, 1914, a proclamation was issued by the Administration as follows :

“It is hereby notified for public information that a telegraphic dispatch has been received from His Excellency the High Commissioner announcing that war has broken out with Germany.”

Without an hour's delay we despatched by train from Salisbury to Victoria Falls a *posse* of police with their horses, giving instructions to them to ride hard to protect the line of the Zambezi where it touched the German south-west border. Business came to a complete standstill. Farmers, many of them retired Regular officers, rode and drove into the town, and clamoured outside the Commandant-General's office to render assistance. The Volunteer regiments were immediately mobilized and the police, in accordance with our plans, equipped for war, and telegraphic instructions sent to each post to be prepared to concentrate as had been arranged after our tour of the country.

Recruiting began almost immediately for the 1st and 2nd Rhodesian Regiments, to which many of my friends with previous military experience received direct commissions. These included Edward Ingpen, who, having been awarded one of the rare Military Crosses given in the campaign in Africa for conspicuous gallantry, was killed in an attack upon Vorbeck's elusive army. Though the Rhodesian regiments were comprised of skilled hunters, men of British stock and Dutchmen accustomed to the Bush and familiar with the guile of hunting, the ruses of the hunter, and the craftiness of the native, it will always stand to the credit of von Lettow Vorbeck that for four years he eluded the British forces and kept the main body of his own army intact. Von Lettow Vorbeck, great sportsman and great gentleman, only brought in his sword when the German military chiefs had signed the Armistice on the Western Front.

I was immediately offered the Adjutancy of the 1st Rhodesia

Regiment ; but to my dismay received a telegram from the War Office to report to the Director of Personal Services at the War Office in London. It seemed indescribably foolish that the Intelligence Officer who knew the country, and possessed every detail of the enemy organization, should be removed at the moment of his usefulness. But it was so.

I received a magnificent send-off from the cadets at Salisbury, who came to a man to the station, again at Gwelo going south, and again at Buluwayo. I stepped on board the *Edinburgh Castle* which was just leaving port on its return trip to England.

We sailed at night without lights, an inconvenience which for myself was thrilling, but one which among South African magnates, accustomed to every luxury, raised loud protests. But their lamentations quickly ceased when a wireless message was received that the Hamburg-Amerika liner, *Der Kaiser Wilhelm Der Grosse*, a corsair of the high seas, was raiding British shipping and in the twinkling of an eye had transformed itself into a cruiser armed with six-inch guns.

Ahead of us was the *Galicia*, and a message informed us that she had been overhauled with a shot across her bows and turned back to Cape Town. The Captain flogged his engines at high speed, and a sharp look-out was kept for this gigantic German liner, at that time the largest ship afloat. As we were passing Teneriffe we heard that the *Kaiser Wilhelm* had coaled in Santa Cruz but a few hours before, and was hiding round the other side of the island. The furnaces were stoked up ; and, receiving a message to divert our course and make for Gibraltar, our liner fled like a greyhound, leaving miles of phosphorescent churnings in its wake, and eluded the German cruiser, which itself, a day later, after a battle lasting for eight hours, was sunk by the British light cruiser, the *Highflyer*. The *Highflyer* pursued us to Gibraltar ; and standing on the quayside, now in uniform, I witnessed the disembarkation of prisoners of war, German sailors in uniform and German citizens, who were to be interned at Gibraltar for four years.

No sooner was the *Edinburgh Castle* alongside than an army of carpenters and naval ratings came on board, and inside twelve hours transformed the promenade decks into troop decks, and erected stables. They unceremoniously turned out the first class passengers, who were again loud in their complaint, and packed them into the second class cabins in the after part of the ship ; and in the morning the 1st Battalion of the Royal Scots

Fusiliers and that of the Gloucester Regiment marched on board, with garrison gunners, artillery, and horses.

Alone among the passengers I kept my cabin, and had the satisfaction in my uniform of being able to smile down upon the "useless mouths," who still made some pretence of preserving their dignity by playing deck quoits and swopping bets on the run of the day.

We were accompanied by two torpedo-boat destroyers. Every now and then as we turned the Portuguese coast and entered the Bay of Biscay one or other of these would turn aside in its course to pursue and overhaul a tramp steamer or sailing vessel. We watched them as a pinnace was put out and a landing party sent on board. In four cases, after the briefest ceremony of examination, the crews of these vessels were taken off; and our destroyers thundered a broadside into the enemy vessels and sank them amid loud cheers from the troops on the decks of the *Edinburgh Castle*.

We were without news, except that the Expeditionary Force had been sent overseas.

CHAPTER IX

1914

First news of Mons and Le Cateau—Reservists called up—To the B.E.F.—Le Havre—The “Thin Red Line”—Armentières—The battalion a family party—A 1914 Trench Diary—The astonishing Armistice—Christmas 1914.

AS we turned up Channel, the first dispatch from the Western Front was received over the wireless. The Captain informed the officer commanding the troops that a message had been received, and requested that he himself should be permitted to read it to the officers. Some sixty of us were gathered in the saloon. I remember how my heart thumped in my throat, with hope and with fear, as we stood there in eager silence awaiting the first message from the campaign. The Captain's face was very grave, and even before he spoke we knew that he had evil tidings. He told us of the disasters at Mons and Le Cateau. The story told nothing of the heroism of the troops, or of how the “Old Contemptibles” had deflected the history of the world. They told nothing of Smith-Dorrien's stand. We simply learnt the names of the regiments which had been wiped out, with the numbers of the casualties amongst officers and men.

“2nd Battalion of Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. Many officers killed and missing. Regiment badly cut up.” What had always been possible had happened.

Pagan, the Adjutant of the Gloucesters, was standing at my side. I had no conception of modern warfare and could only think in terms of a South African campaign. My mind flashed to Magersfontein. I was staggered by the news, and tears welled up into my eyes. But Pagan pressed my arm and said, “Bad luck, old man. It's your chance now.”

The vessel steamed up Southampton Water and I disembarked with my kit, taking the first ordinary passenger-train to London. I was too overwhelmed in London to observe its changes or the excited crowds in the streets. I was one of the very few in

uniform, and as I got out of my taxi at the War Office, they stared at me with curiosity. I entered with a letter in my hand from the Commandant-General and asked to see the Director of Personal Services. A subaltern instructed me to report immediately at Woolwich, where he told me the reservists of the Regiment were being concentrated.

I went straight to Woolwich and found Major Kirk in command, and several thousand men in nondescript uniforms or in civilian attire, packed twenty to twenty-four in a bell tent and stumping over their ankles in slimy black mud.

It was a good foretaste of the Western Front.

Officers, mere boys, were attempting to persuade the reservists into some kind of military order and to equip them. But these hoary-headed men with Indian and South African memories, and militiamen, boys and casual labourers who had enjoyed the picnic of a camp on Loch Lomond's side, did not take kindly to the indescribable dirt and disorganization of the Plumstead Marshes. Their immediate duty, while being made up into drafts for overseas, was the protection of the arsenals, river bank, and factories of Woolwich, a dismal task at any time.

A very large number of men spent their days and nights in a state of wild intoxication, to which end they were greatly aided by the civilian population. Kirk, being a man of understanding, permitted a week or two of this ill-discipline to proceed before he began to put on the screw. Scarcely a day passed without a draft being sent out under officers who were without experience, and who indeed themselves were but mere babes.

I obtained two hours' leave of absence and met my mother in London and then returned to the squalor of Woolwich. But within the week, although I pleaded desperately to be sent out with the next draft, I had been detailed to proceed to Gravesend in charge of musketry instruction. I was familiar with the ranges at Gravesend, having shot there as a cadet from the Royal Military Academy, and I was provided with a very pleasant camping-ground in the barracks of the town, in which had been concentrated reservists of both the Queen's and Middlesex Regiments.

Almost within a week the first-line reservists of my own regiment had passed through my hands, and volunteers began to pour in, attired in every imaginable kind of uniform for the task. There were tramps and young men in tennis trousers, men with kilts and lounge jackets, bowler hats, straw hats, glengarries,

Balmorals ; men so old that it did not seem possible that they could walk even as far as the ranges ; and boys so young that when they joined in the general naughtiness and misbehaved themselves, before my sergeant, now the Regimental Sergeant-Major of the 1st Battalion, I used to flick up their kilts and spank them on the bare backside.

Not one of these men had ever done a day's soldiering before in their lives, and I was entrusted with the task of teaching them to shoot with a rifle in a Course lasting three days, as well as instilling into them some kind of military discipline. But it was all great fun ; and in looking after these wild folk, I was helped tremendously by perhaps the best parson I have ever met, Parton Shinton. Although not a chaplain, he contributed the whole of his time and most of that of his congregation to the service and comfort of my command. He instituted concerts and entertainments, and when I left my organization and my permanent staff in Gravesend and received orders to take a draft to France, I received a letter from him which I reproduce hereunder—

"No man but you at such a quick crisis in his life would remember, let alone redeem, a promise of this kind. I greatly admire you for it. The money shall be faithfully and entirely spent on concerts under my own supervision.

Yesterday I went to the camp, and heard you greatly praised. 'A splendid soldier,' 'I would go anywhere with him.' You were much beloved by fellow-officers and men.

Your name shall be included in one public intercession in church every Sunday.

May God give you heroic opportunities, great promotion, and a safe return, and His help every hour.

I shall be glad to have a card from you. Are you short of socks or a body-belt ? Let me know, and our ladies will knit them for you gladly. You made a splendid impression on my people.

Auf wiedersehen (in the language of the enemy)."

Every wish and every prayer of his has been more than amply fulfilled and to him I shall remain always grateful. The pity of it is that, with few rare exceptions, the chaplains sent for service with soldiers in the field were possessed with so little of his philosophy and understanding of men.

We had not been informed of our port of embarkation, and

travelled in pitch darkness. When finally the train drew up we craned our necks out of the windows in order to discover where we had arrived. It was Southampton. With little delay, the draft, in company with many others, went on board ship, again always in complete darkness except for the feeble glimmering of oil lanterns. The passage fortunately was smooth, or I doubt not that I should have re-experienced the disgusting horrors of my first voyage in a troopship. Again we did not know whither we were bound ; but at dawn I recognized the tall obelisk which surmounts the white cliffs of St. Adresse to the east of Le Havre harbour.

The ship berthed quickly ; and the draft, both hungry and sleepy-eyed, led by a private soldier who acted as guide, began its first experience of slithering and stumbling over the *pavé* roads of France. After passing through the town before the still admiring eyes of French citizens, we began to climb up a road, deeply rutted by transport wheels and thick with mud, on to the grass downs which surmount the harbour ; and finally came to rest in a sea of mud, from which arose bell tents flapping in a stiff breeze, like a fishing fleet in a murky sea.

Hot tea was available and a fatigue-party drew the rations ; but it appeared that those responsible for this camp were still absorbed with peace-time notions, so the officers were expected to conjure food for themselves. Having disposed of the draft I descended into the town to renew my memory with its familiarities ; and having purchased eggs, bread, and sausages, together with a Primus stove, returned to camp. I shared a tent with Colin Boyd and a pale-faced kid with the voice and manners of a child, named Lothian ; and we spent most of the day, when not examining arms, the only military exercise, in preparing and cooking variations of egg dishes and sausages. The camp was indescribably cold, and though we were accompanied by our flea-bags, such strict instructions had been given on the subject of light kit that of blankets we had none. The later years of the War were sheer luxury compared with the cold, hunger, and disorganization of those early days in 1914.

But on the third day I received an order to parade the draft and to prepare to entrain for St. Omer, then the headquarters of Sir John French. Since our arrival at Le Havre it had rained without cessation, so that the party which went forth to war was the most miserable that I had hitherto witnessed. Before being permitted to leave the camp, a prosperous-looking gentleman,

with white moustache and monocle, heavily coated and well booted, appeared on the area of mud set aside for such parades. In impassioned tones, with a voice quivering with patriotism, he delivered himself of a homily upon morale, while water cascaded down our backs and the wind from the sea lashed us with its icy bitterness. Although none of us were stirred by these bleatings of the Camp Commandant, I was thrilled with the idea of joining "The Thin Red Line," which as I now knew had stood at Le Cateau with the same valour which it had displayed at Balaclava.

At St. Omer there seemed to be, at least, some kind of understanding of war and of its organization. An officer led my draft of three hundred men to billet for the night in an enormous vinery, under glass. The heating plant was still in perfect order; and if Le Havre had been bleak and wintry, the vinery

in St. Omer was comfort sublime and almost tropical in heat. To add to our good fortunes we were issued with more rations than any human person could possibly consume, and almost tucked up in bed by a staff officer solicitous for our comfort.

By eight the following morning we were already on our road

to join the 93rd near Armentières. Again our unused feet slithered unmercifully over the *pavé*, already deep in a black treacly mud, through which staff cars and lorries ploughed their way, covering us from head to foot in muck. It was a peculiarly evil-looking draft which reported at battalion headquarters at Houplines that night and was billeted in straw barns before being posted to the various companies in the line.

Moulton Barrett had already been dispossessed of his command and I found that Kirk, who had bade us good-bye at Woolwich, had arrived hurriedly while we tarried, to reorganize the Battalion and to infiltrate into it something of a fighting spirit.

Next morning the draft was paraded and divided to strengthen the four companies, and at night-time with some sixty men, I reported to Major Maxwell Rouse, my old skipper from Jamestown, now in command of B Company.

Our defences in front of Houplines consisted of a single trench, like a ditch, ankle- or knee-deep in mud and slime, with no fire-



step. In the back, or parados, of this ditch had been cut recesses known as "bivvys," in which we lived when not actually on duty scraping out the bottom of the trench, keeping sentry, or shooting at moving objects, presumably Germans, two hundred yards away. To escape from the trench for purposes of sanitation, delivering messages, communication, or to remove a man hit by a sniper, it was necessary to mount, either to the road and run for it, or to creep on one's belly through the turnip-tops. But within a day or two we had cut a narrow trench which departed into the open country behind a bush which provided a flying start against the good aim of a sniper.

By great labour, too, keeping us both warm and provoking an appetite for eternal stew and tea, we dug out a kind of mausoleum and in this laid doors taken from the village, which served as beds. After a few raids on those houses which had been hit by shell-fire, we had as our headquarters a large and comfortable dwelling-room, something like the basement of a suburban house, with a glazed window which looked towards the battalion headquarters across the turnip-tops, fitted with lace curtains, and the whole well carpentered and furnished. In this crude dwelling, neither bullet- nor shell-proof, we ate and slept, played cards, swopped yarns, and occasionally quarrelled. But we were an interesting little crowd: Maxwell Rouse, country gentleman and *rara avis*, a Liberal too; Aidan Liddell, professor of biology at Oxford University, who among his other astonishing qualifications possessed a flying certificate, and a few months later was the first British airman to win the Victoria Cross; Colin Boyd, an irrepressible youth who was our first casualty; Gillespie, also an Oxford don; Clark, who had been Adjutant, a soldier of the serious type; and Peter Anderson, a boy with a baby face whom everyone adored.

Colin Boyd took a smack in the head almost immediately. Within a day or two, Rouse, whom we refused to treat with proper dignity, in a fit of peek took his ration, a tin plate filled with eggs and bacon, on to the parapet, but within a moment or two returned with so wry a face that we all exploded with laughter until we saw that a bullet had drilled a clean hole through his arm, and that he was dripping with blood. Rouse refused our attentions and decided to go, without our help, to the aid-post. So we saw him, ignoring the new communication trench, mount on to the road. And then, chivvied by a sniper, he suffered insult added to injury, perambulating

on all fours through the mud the half-mile back to headquarters.

Bertie Bankier, who afterwards migrated to the Welsh Guards, and Bobby Moir were the best type of subaltern, energetic, self-sacrificing, gay-spirited.

Warfare in 1914 on the Western Front was so wholly different from that which succeeded it, especially after the arrival of the New Army at Loos, that it deserves some record larger and worthier than it has received. Though for some months after Le Cateau and "Plugstreet" casualties were not especially high, the discomfort suffered by these troops was far greater than anything experienced by those who came afterwards, supported by a well-organized Quartermaster-General's branch.

For these earlier warriors it was a war of improvisation. We had no baths, so we washed in the vast vats of a disused brewery. There were no delousing stations, so we hired the village ladies, with hot irons with which to pulverize our underclothing and to stick the heated prongs of forks up the pleats of our kilts. We had no bombs, so we utilized jam-pots, which exploded with all the success of a Mills grenade. We had no rifle-grenades so we fired jam-pots like rockets from the ends of rifles.

And thank heavens, we had very little staff, and an Army Commander, Sir John French, so remote that we were seldom bothered with being forced to report our doings so long as we kept the trenches warm, and far less seldom were troubled with an inspection. During 1914 I only saw one general, but his name was Congreve and that speaks for itself.

The impressions of the Great War which remain in my mind most clearly, especially since I survived its years throughout, are the great dramas of the battle of the Somme, the attack on the Hindenburg Line before Arras, the Menin Road Battle, Third Ypres, the German Offensive of March and April 1918, and the Final Drive culminating in the Armistice before Maubeuge.

As has been observed, the character of warfare and of individual experience in 1914 and early in 1915 was wholly different from the large operations, in which whole Corps were employed, divisions moved from point to point on the battlefield as pawns in a game, and in which the individual became engulfed in the whole panoply of battle. In those early days a battalion was a family party. The same faces, so to speak, were always at the breakfast table, and it was a family large enough to represent every type of character, and one in which the elders, the officers,

had full opportunity to understand and appreciate the complex of humanity which they were privileged to lead. But as the scale of war grew, and one action lasting two or three days would reduce a battalion from a thousand men to one hundred or less, the conception of the family disappeared. The attitude of the unit commander of necessity changed towards the personnel under his charge, and larger problems occupied his mind.

Warfare of the type experienced by the "Old Contemptibles" can never recur in modern history. Both science and the precedent of national armies are opposed to it.

In order to provide, therefore, a picture of that individual experience during the months which marked the turning-point in European history, I have chosen to insert some pages and notes from the war diary of Lieutenant Graham Seton Hutchison, with 2nd Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 19th Brigade of the British Expeditionary Force.

November 20th. Bailleul. Bombs dropped on town. Billeted in long glass vineries. Thousands of pounds' worth of acres of them. Another bitterly cold night. Food very short, only bully beef.

November 21st. Paraded 8.30 a.m. Marched to Croix du Bac. Saw Artists Rifles, looked a good crowd. Roads very slippery—covered in ice; large cobbles, most difficult for marching. Heavy firing on our left. Reached Armentières at 3.15 p.m. Thence to Houplines. Only 400 of the Battalion left. Freezing hard. Bivouacked in old school gymnasium. Most of roof blown off and no windows. Floor all glass and plaster.

November 22nd. Battalion went into trenches. Remained in reserve in Bois Grenier. Billeted in house with sheets. Chucked away sheets, too cold, no windows. Bats flew into the light. Much shelling by day and heavy sniping. Farm and haystacks behind our trenches set on fire by shells: where our rations were stored.

November 23rd. Went into trenches. Huns signalled to our snipers bulls, centres, magpies, and misses. Two shells from our Howitzers came overhead. Huns retaliated with shrapnel and Jack Johnsons. Very snug little mess, bit of a squash, four of us, but warm. Sound of a gramophone in German trenches.

November 24th. Took on dog watch 12.30 p.m.—2.30 a.m. Desultory sniping. Took two men out to examine wire. One wounded by sniping. Finished new fire trench.

November 25th. Very dark night. Sentries jumpy. Dog watch again. Digging all day. Our Battery behind Houplines at

11.30 a.m. fired on farm-houses opposite D Company. Effective fire. Two Allemands sent to glory. Germans retaliated by firing salvos of Jack Johnsons. Further portion of Armentières went west. At dusk went with three men to investigate farm in front of lines evacuated by Germans, brought in potatoes, entrenching tools, and a kitchen. Very dark night. Germans threw search-lights across our lines. No mail. Hideously dirty and unshaven. Dog watch again. Raining hard.



Reservist with

Indian Memories expressing
his views on 'sand bags'

November 26th. Hard day trenching. Rain continues. Rifles in fearful state. Bolts impossible to open, ammunition too dirty to place in rifles. Threw out a sap 30 yards to left front to be operated by night if foggy so as to keep pulse of company steady. Only three hours' rest.

November 27th. Good news from Russia of crushing victory. Is it true? Heavy sniping. Man hit twice going to draw water at 8.30 a.m. Major R. hit in left arm. B.'s cap badge bent by bullet. Raised parapet in front. Two more men wounded. One died, hit in stomach.

November 28th. Enemy hoisted yellow flag with black eagle in centre, we replied with Union Jack. 5 p.m. Party from A Company advanced to farm, whence snipers had been most active, and laid charge to explode it. House blown up at 7 p.m.

November 29th. Worked hard on mess hut and roofed it in. Splendid, like a country cottage, curtained windows, 4 feet below surface of ground, with shafts leading to rear.

November 30th. Haggis for breakfast. A large welcome mail. Bright warm day. Very quiet day. Made rum punch for the men.

December 1st. Went to H.Q.'s at 5 a.m., and then to Armentières for a bath. Peter had found large private house. Beautifully clean and scented.

December 2nd. One man hit in head. The King in Bailleul. Eight men went to represent the Regiment. Mother and Baby in action. Adopted the T-trench idea. Headquarters shelled, four casualties—work of spies?

December 3rd. Headquarters shelled again. Five civilians killed. All our billets changed. Three of our Farman biplanes came over. Mostly boldly handled. Directing artillery fire. One casualty, man killed, shot through loophole in mouth. Peter's great jam pudding made and eaten. Very good.

December 4th. Heavy shelling and heavy rain. Collapsing dugouts and falling traverses. Trenches deep in water and slime. Our utensils now have names—"Bertie," the bread-knife; "Oliver," the opener; "Thomas," the tea-strainer, and "Horace Rumbold"—he is Falstaffian like his name—the rum-jar; "Martha," the milk-bottle. L. has become "Count Slabonga," and I the "Super-Man" (I know not why); B. continues to smoke hundreds of cigarettes.

December 5th. Furious sniping all day, and machine-gun used against our trenches, probably because Germans aware that many of parapets no longer bullet-proof. Swept away by heavy rains. Turned on Maxim guns at nightfall and searched from 300 to 2000 yards. Cries heard from German trenches, then a searchlight switched on. Pooped at it. It vanished. First watch.

December 6th. Poured with rain all day. Trenches diabolically wet. Peter carried a door from Bois Grenier and made me a new bivvy. At 11 a.m. A Company reported that three Germans had waved white flag from a farm in front. A sergeant went to investigate and brought them in, self-surrendered prisoners. Men of 139th Regiment, XIXth Saxon Corps. Fed up. Report

much artillery mobilized on our front. Trenches more strongly held than our own. Only one meal per diem. 8.30 p.m., vigorous firing opened on our lines. Dashed out in pitch darkness up the trenches. Great difficulty in getting men into firing position owing to one platoon working on entrenchments in rear coming in without arms. Rifle flashes coming from 50 yards in front. Four of our men killed. After twenty minutes Germans heavily shelled our position. Seven more men killed. Got hit in hand, much blood and big bruise. Many rifles jammed with dirty ammunition (Platoon Sergeants should have spare rifles in reserve clean for use). Carefully delivered fire by volleys of greater value than individual rapid fire. Corporal P. controlled his section well. Sergeant L. useless, an absolute panic-monger. Middle watch, 2 a.m.-3.30 a.m. Germans seen removing dead or wounded on a stretcher. A half-hearted attack. One of our advanced posts was run over and passed. German officer seen passing orders down the line.



December 7th. Trenches taken over at 5.30 p.m., in a deluge of rain, pitch darkness, and hideous slime.

December 12th. Walked our weary and cramped limbs to billets, the Lunatic Asylum, Armentières, again. Very comfortable with a spring bed. Town in tense darkness.

December 13th. Marched the Company to Erquingheim for a wash in the converted dye-works. Best-organized thing I have seen yet. Men stripped naked, their clothes in small batches being placed in trolleys and rushed outside where an army of blanchisuses with irons and fumigating liquid iron them out. While this operation was in progress, the men passed into another room where there were vast vats of steaming water and here they washed. On returning found their clothes ready, fumigated, washed, and dried by pressure. In afternoon, went with Peter to No. 6. I had a bath and my shoes mended. Lovely long sleep.

December 14th-20th. In Armentières . . . attended service. Good address by Padre. Peace in war, if the soul has peace. Our billets shelled during church. Three men hit. B Company wall pierced. Several men bruised with bricks and flying bedsteads. Paraded for trenches 4 p.m. Took over worst trenches

on earth. Poured with rain. Slimy and damnable : a wicked night and bitterly cold.

December 21st. Xmas gifts pour in from all round the countryside. My dugout is a quagmire. Bailed for hours, men wonderfully cheerful. Peter keeps me amused with imaginative castles in the air for the future—after the war. Our policy would seem to be to hem in Germany with walls of steel ; while our fleet makes it possible to land troops in Northern Germany, or strengthen the combined Serbian and Russian Armies in South-Eastern Galicia and Austria ; paralyse Austria and make her surrender and so close the neutral Italian door into Germany, and exhaust her. This would be costly. We can afford it. Every day to Germany means an undermined morale and a



doubting population, while every day to us means an increasing army—British, French, Russians, while Japan is now freed after the fall of Tsingtau to assist us with her army. Quiet day.

December 22nd. Snowing. A good deal of "wind" in the line. Much firing, then sounds of cheering. Bitter argument with S. and M. All very rude to each other—pacified.

December 23rd. Great excitement in mail. Gifts to officers from Queen Alexandra. A lovely pair of gauntlet gloves, a pipe and chocolate. I received mufflers from Oxshott friends for distribution in the Company. More snow.

December 24th. German band in the trenches. We sang in turns—Germans and ourselves. Sergeant M. exchanged badges with a German officer. Much shouting. On the *qui vive* all night.

December 25th. Heavy frost and thick mist. Every man received a Christmas card from H.M. the King and H.M. the Queen, bearing the message "With our best wishes for Christmas

1914. May God protect you and bring you safe home. Mary R. George R.I." A great rum issue. Many expressions of goodwill. In the afternoon war ceased and we advanced across our trenches and chatted with the Germans. Most amusing. Can this be war? Some had played football against Glasgow Celtic. All were certain of a victory in about six months, for Germany, and the end of the war. They gave us cigars and cap badges. They were men of the 133rd and 139th Regiments of the XIXth Saxon Corps. We parted saying, "To-morrow it is war." Mother sent me a hot-water bottle. Everyone very jealous.

December 26th. Good deal of artillery fire in the morning. In the evening the whole Brigade relieved. Marched to the billets in the Science College. B., C., the doctor and I were in a very comfortable house, that of Monsieur Johnson. Piano, lovely beds, spacious rooms, tasteful decoration, and not much damaged.

December 27th. Played football for the Company. Awfully sloppy ground, but good game. Long route march to Pont de Nieppe and Erquingheim--everyone footsore.

December 28th January 2nd. Armentières billets.

January 2nd. Took over trenches at Bois Grenier from Shropshires. Ghastly night and wicked trenches. The whole place a river. No sleep.

January 3rd. Waded to H.Qrs. up to my waist. Bailed all day without avail. Water gained 2 feet. No sleep. Rained all day.

January 4th. Poured all day. Another attempt to make trench habitable. No use. Rained all day.

January 5th. Rained all day. Worked on communication trench.

January 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th. Life in these days too hideous to write. Continuous rain and disappointment. Bitterly cold. Numerous casualties from shell- and rifle-fire. Many sick.

January 10th. Impossible to cook anything. Mud, rain, sickness. Trenches washed away. Line heavily shelled with several direct hits. Difficult to assist wounded owing to heavy sniping. The smell has become awful. Have abandoned my kilt and wear it as a cape. Peter went out at night and brought back a biscuit tin of hot tea. God bless his soul!

January 11th. Relieved. Bathed and cleaned off all my body lice, some as large as small scorpions. Have a bad cold.

January 12th. K. and M. gone sick. L. home for good. B. sick also. Took over trenches by night at La Hussoie. Awful snow by day. Trenches practically don't exist.

January 13th. Bitterly cold night. Freezing hard. Working party 9 p.m.—1 a.m. High cutting wind made it almost too cold to work. R.E. sent no material worth having. Awful night. Very wet and freezing. Rubbed each other's feet with oil. Could not lie down. Huddled ourselves in a blanket and prayed for morning. Most of B Company sick and getting frost-bitten.

January 14th. Vigorous sniping. Four men badly hit on working party. Wickedly cold. Tried to sleep on a board laid over a minnerwerfer hole. Kept each other warm and hugged the hot-water bottle—miraculously filled. A bit feverish.

January 15th. Feel pretty rotten. Visited the Company squatting under odd bits of corrugated iron and in miserable earthworks. Not connected anywhere. Had to run like hell. Heavy sniping. Legs and feet getting cramped with wet. Rub each other for half an hour every few hours. God bless tobacco, although its quality has gone to the devil! No sleep.

January 16th. Started building a breastwork with hen-coop dugouts. Germans doing the same thing. No sniping. Slept in a new hen-coop. Just room for two. Like being in a packing-case. High above the ground in view of Germans. Very quiet night, no shooting. Glorious sleep.

January 17th. Bright sunshine. Stood to at 7 a.m. Allemands all running about in the open. We did the same thing and started on the breastwork. No shooting. A sort of unwritten armistice. Each minding his own business. Fires and braziers going everywhere with clouds of smoke on both sides of the line, and everyone walking about. H. visited us from H.Q. and was very rude about the fires. Had my letters home stopped for three weeks as a punishment, or must be censored by himself. Relieved at 5.30 p.m., and back to a new billet at L'Armée. Bed on flour-bags in the boulangerie. Beautifully warm. Perfect peace and quietness, and H. has gone on leave. We're enjoying ourselves: and Madame Caniot believes herself our mother.

January 29th. Furious fighting proceeding all along the line except here. Between the Armentières—Rue de Bois railway line and Burnt Farm—the sector occupied by the right wing of the



16th Brigade (the Buffs) and D Company of the 93rd—owing to the fact that the water has reached the level of the tops of the parapets of both the German and our own trenches, and snow is beginning to fall, we are sitting on the parapets looking at each other while heavy sniping continues on either flank. There is no cross-fire.

January 30th. At dawn we commenced work on a new breast-work line. Large working parties approach both our own and the German lines carrying engineer material and timber. The Saxons opposite the Buffs are sharing a heavy iron-headed hammer which is thrown across the barbed wire. Two imitation Buckingham Palace Guards with fixed bayonets have been mounted, one British, one German, some 20 yards distant from each other. Special vigilance is now maintained by us. The distance of the German line from our breastwork is 60 yards across a field of turnip-tops. We converse with the Germans who have invited us to play a football match in no-man's-land. Our work seems to proceed more rapidly than that of the enemy, but to be less solid. The enemy is using much cement.

January 31st. After a gingering from the General Staff the Buffs "declared war" at 11 a.m. An "ultimatum" sent at 10 a.m. This does not seem to affect our friends. We continued building while the Buffs and Saxons tried to smash each other's work.

February 2nd. Artillery seems by mutual agreement to have "declared war" for us. The whole of the new work on both sides is now flying in the air under high explosive.

A sufficient commentary upon these notes is provided by an extract of the official communique.

PRINCIPAL OPERATIONS FROM 16TH JANUARY TO 26TH JANUARY.

"The weather conditions, which were equally unfavourable to the enemy as to ourselves, are sufficient explanations of the small efforts made.

"As far as the Allied Armies are concerned there is no reason.

"These Armies are being constantly re-enforced and their offensive power increased from day to day. It is thus to their advantage to produce their maximum effort at the moment when they dispose of the maximum means.

"This is the action they will take.

"Even if the consequent strain produced at times a disagreeable impression among the civilian population we are convinced that



THE ASTONISHING ARMISTICE ON THE WESTERN FRONT,
CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR 1914

Waterlogged trenches have been abandoned. Working on the new breastwork line in a turnip field. The German line, 150 yards distant, is seen in the background.



UNDER SNOW, CHRISTMAS 1914

Completed breastwork carried out during the informal armistice.

this impression will disappear if it is remembered that *the only thing that matters is the gain*, without useless sacrifice, to complete success.

“All the recent local engagements have strengthened the conviction of the Military Authorities that they will obtain this result.”

I may observe that the Armistice was signed on the 11th November, 1918.

CHAPTER X

THE OLD CONTEMPTIBLES

Biography of a batman Weather most unkind Recruiting—Inventions The New Army Thirty Third Division Forming the Machine Gun Corps The Brickstacks at Guinchy.

THE record of those early days, giving some clue to the spirit which animated those privileged few who held the great hordes of Germany at bay, is to be found in a biography of my batman, one of the best friends man ever had.

He lies now in Ration Farm Cemetery ; the war name still persists. And this quiet place is near to La Chapelle d'Armentières—Chapelle—which links his spirit with a serene holiness which was its fitting birthright, and Armentières—with that light-hearted gaiety, his very soul, which will sing so long as war songs are with us. I have since found the plot, the row, the little grave, made so easy for those who seek, by the patience, skill, and art of the Commission which has spent ten years in fashioning the quiet resting-place of those who sleep in Flanders.

He is near to the place where he fell ; but he will remain with me to the end. I'm an old soldier now, and I shall just fade away like the rest. He was a stripling, who was taken quickly, perhaps to a better counsellor than myself. Who knows ? Whom the gods love . . . Ah ! yes, I've heard that many times ; but in those days we were all young ; and perhaps, too, we who remain may have left our youth behind a lost generation. Peter, that was his name, has always remained with me, as vivid in some newer life as he was in those days. Beneath a rugged exterior, yet roughly tender and bravely beautiful, he possessed a spirit which, like many others now passed on, in its perfect example will abide for all time with the living. As I stood beside the simple white stone which marks his earthly passage, my mind travelled back across the years of his life.

I will tell you the story of that laddie so you may know something of the sons of the people. When they open their doors to



Are we downhearted?
No!

you, they often close their hearts. You do not know these lads taken from mean streets, from the squalor of great cities. They have hearts of gold. But perhaps it is in a mother who has given and lost everything that you may discover the secret of a son's loveliness. Do you know her? She wears a crazy bonnet, her clothes are of no period or style; her hands shake to a cup of tea; she is bent with unceasing toil; her beauty is despoiled by want and watching, and yet remaining in all its serenity. She is stricken with poverty, bowed with age, rendering a thousand services to those whose burdens may be greater than her own. She consoles the griefs of a score of neighbours and yet her own grief in its silence and hopelessness is greater than any other. And when you see a thousand lads stepping forth like gods to war, remember the mother; and when those lads do not return, as they will not, many of them, do not forget that little figure in a crazy bonnet who in a garret in some mean byway may bear the burden of many others as the cloak for her greater grief.

Beyond his suckling Peter never knew a mother; but a father he remembered, someone who had taken the little fellow on his knee, laughed with him, led him up beside Ben Lomond overlooking the Loch, his one great friend of the past. There had been a grandmother, too, in the rugged island of Islay, swept by Atlantic storms. Peter, an orphan, without shelter or friends, was gathered from the streets of Glasgow by the kindly arms of law and charity and sent to a school, set amid green fields and rolling hills on the outskirts of the city. Here, with genial understanding, tutelage, and not unkind discipline, amid rough companionship, body and character had developed. He had acquired a more than sound education, but as a piper—he led the pipe band—and as a dancer, he shone like a star in that boyish constellation. Such schools fashion fine recruits for the bands of British regiments, and in due course a little lad, but withal a proficient piper, joined a family of eight hundred men. In such a family a cheerful countenance is a first passport to popularity, and this Peter quickly acquired, yet remained a son unspoilt.

I remember well when I first noticed him. I was whiling away an afternoon of boredom of an orderly officer's duties, with its trivial round of inspecting cook-houses, visiting men confined in the guard-room, and mounting guard, and had strolled in the evening on the ramparts of the antiquated fortress which stands overlooking the Moray Firth. I sat upon a moss-

covered wall, and idly watched the soft lapping waves as they were swept and tumbled by an unseen hand, when my thoughts were turned by the skirl of pipes, and a piper passed behind me. He turned in his beat, and continued to pace up and down the rampart. The music was well played. I turned to view the player, and he marched on for some minutes. Then he stopped, and stood alert before me, smiling. He was a little lad. "Will ye hae muir music, sirr?" the piper said. That was an unusual experience for me. I asked him his name, and some usual questions. He was pleased, and chattered away merrily, an unspoilt soul. Then his mind sped on, and he said suddenly, to finish a conversation which perhaps he felt had exceeded the courtesy of military discipline, "Noo, I will play." I watched him fill the bag and retune the pipes, his pink cheeks growing scarlet to the effort, while brown eyes, puckered in merriment, twinkled at me over the chanter. He played a solemn march, swinging his kilt with all the swagger of a pipe-major, followed by a rollicking reel in which a neat leg and toe throbbed to the excitement of the dance. "Noo, I'll run, sirr," he said in apology for an ending and dismissal; and sped away to the steps leading down to the barrack square.

When I joined the 93rd at Houplines I inquired for Peter. I feared he might have perished or have been captured, to languish like so many in a bitter camp at Elberfeld or in Silesia, but learnt that after Le Cateau the boys had been sent far from the battle line, west of Paris. The need for men was now so urgent that even the lads were ordered to rejoin their units. We were billeted in the lunatic asylum in Armentières, which in those November days in the first months of war was almost intact, except for a great gaping wound in the eastern wing, from which the furnishings hung grotesquely as a warning. The shops were open and doing a brisk trade. Mademoiselle of every age was everywhere. Famous Flemish names, some reminding me of those great Huguenot families which have for years become a part of England, were writ above the textile factories—Vaterlow and Jaques, and others. We were everywhere welcome; the town was *en fête*, I remember. I was standing outside the great portico of the asylum as a new draft drew up. Peter, among them, spied me first when, to order, they stood easy while a sergeant sought the Adjutant for posting and billeting instructions. After dismissal he saluted me, a happy grin stretching from ear to ear. Of course, I claimed him. In those first months

the pomp of war had been bent before its dire necessity. The luxury of bagpipes and pipers gave way to the need of rifles. Peter became my batman, a faithful servant, a friend and counsellor, an ever-present companion to give me confidence in the darkness of a dangerous night, and good cheer, when fortune favoured a visit to battalion headquarters, and a quick run along the disused tramway from Houplines to Armentières to refresh the company mess-box and perchance a bath. This last was the lad's discovery. He took me one day to a great house in the Rue Denis. The occupants had retired to Paris, but an elderly housekeeper remained as the perfect hostess. There was a luxurious bathroom, hot water, bath towels, and afterwards hot chocolate and biscuits in the little *salon*, while Madam Marle prattled of the War and of what had been before. And then one day the Germans shelled the town. The more timid shopkeepers closed their stores, and put up great shutters before the windows. Several houses in Houplines and upon the fringe of the town were hit. Bois Grenier in one day became a shambles, and deserted, the dead being left where they had fallen at their daily task until extricated and buried by kindly British hands. And as I bathed, with Peter in attendance, a monstrous explosion tore the side of the house, scattering glass and plaster throughout the bathroom. That was the end of bathing in luxury. Thereafter we took pot luck in the steam at a dye-works at Erquinghem—a military improvisation, part laundry and delousing station conducted by Belgian girls, part bathing establishment in which whole companies of naked men passed in solemn procession beneath the squirts of a feeble shower of water or bathed in great vats of variable temperature. There was not much fighting in these early trench days. Our field-guns would fire two or three rounds each day at buildings in the enemy's line from which well-posted snipers peppered us; or, perhaps, would save the meagre supply of ammunition for a salvo. There was vigorous sniping and machine-guns, but the crescendo of battle had yet to come.

One day Peter, after a venturesome journey to a farm-house almost within the lines to acquire fresh eggs, came running to tell me that a new gun, the largest he had ever seen, had been installed on the roadside beside Ration Farm. An artillery subaltern with a box periscope appeared in the lines and asked me what was the most annoying feature of the enemy's landscape. I described a house with a green shutter. He raised the periscope,



THE FRONT, AND ONLY, LINE AT BOIS GRENIER NEAR ARMENTIÈRES, CONSISTING OF
SAND-BAGGED AND TIMBERED BREASTWORK

The foreground illustrates the mass of treachy mud leading to the line. A sheet of corrugated iron fills a gap in the breastwork, destroyed by shell-fire—a perilous passage.

and a moment later a loud crack in the air beside the periscope indicated the vigilance of a sniper from this vantage point. "Mother will blot that out in a moment," said the gunner, and telephoned to a comrade directing gunfire. We waited in excited expectancy, Peter bobbing his glengarry upon a straw-filled sandbag above the trench line to attract the prowess and ambition of the marksman. In a moment there was a loud thud, the hiss of a passing shell; and a cloud of pink brickdust obscured the house with the green shutter. When the cloud passed before a light wind, a ragged hole remained where the shutter had been. "Mother" had accomplished a sound spanking. Later another similar gun appeared. We gave it the nickname of "Baby," and both Mother and Baby did well. The days and nights in those sodden trenches were without event. We dug continuously in the clinging clay in an effort to defeat the rising water. During December the rain streamed down upon us. The trenches had been transformed into dykes, which no scheme of drainage could empty. We shed our sodden, mud-cloaked kilts, and waded through the knee-deep quagmire with bare feet and in our shirt tails, or we would rest and sleep fitfully in narrow scoops cut in the walls of half trench, half breastwork, just above the Plimsoll line. There was one night in Willow trench, when, as I snatched a little sleep in the dark, still hours of early morning, while Peter took his turn on guard, there was a wild cry: "The dam's burst." One of the many tributaries of the River Lys had broken its embankment. Peter dragged me from the dugout into which torrents of water were pouring and we ran along the open ground, extricating men half drowned, the old Maxim gun, of which I then had charge, and ammunition. Three men perished before we were able to raise the heavy roof of a dugout which prevented their escape. The German trenches, too, were flooded. The cheerless, rain-swept morning found two companies of the 93rd seated upon a parapet, with such poor cover as may be provided by empty ammunition boxes, and sheets of corrugated iron, facing two companies of a Saxon regiment in a similar predicament. They waved feebly to us.

By mutual, though unwritten, consent, an armistice was declared, and within a few yards of each other, the opposing forces built their breastworks. For three weeks not a gun was fired, not a shot heard. Peter and I occupied a timber structure, one of those prepared by the engineers in mass production, in form like a hen-coop. My company placed these in line, and, by

night, the candlelight of some hundred or more such habitations, which stretched between the Rue de Bois and Bois Grenier, could be observed from the enemy side, twinkling through the cracks between the timbers. A hard frost descended, and we would stand in that Tom Tiddler's ground, just our own side of the growing Saxon fortification, watching them at work. One day Peter, with complete unconcern, borrowed a great wooden mallet with which to drive the baulks of timber destined to hold a flimsy parapet ; and he returned it, too.

Came Christmas with gifts from the King and the card of Their Majesties : " May God protect you and bring you safe home " ; boxes of chocolate from Princess Mary, monster cakes from home, and bags filled with comforts made by quiet, unassuming women who had transformed their country houses into workrooms. And there were gifts from wives and sweet-hearts. I bought for Peter a new pipe. He was a great pipe-smoker, a fact which, in a cigarette era, was remarkable. But it was evidence of character, the desire to be regarded as a man, despite his years. Then five days' leave came to me, my first. I asked the Colonel for another pass, and it was granted. Peter came with me to the luxury of white sheets, bright firesides, warm baths, and the mellow quietness of warm hearts.

There was a glorious snowy week-end with friends amid the Surrey hills. Peter played his pipes during dinner and danced to make glad the heart of village children. In those days a kilted soldier was an uncommon sight away from Aldershot or Salisbury Plain. And then we journeyed back across the Channel, followed by a long day of jolting in a draughty overladen train in which, huddled beneath a blanket bound round us for mutual warmth, we smoked and gossiped, or turned the pages of the illustrated magazines. At nightfall the wheezing, soot-spitting train dumped us at St. Omer, and we discovered a little hotel, its dining-room, bedrooms, and couches already overfilled with officers and their batmen going to the blessed relief of leave, or returning from it ; and we pillowed our heads on packs beneath the billiard table, wrapping blankets round us against the draught from the ever-opening door. We found the Regiment in rest billets. Peter sought a better billet than the rude floor of an artisan's kitchen prescribed for me and my valise, and found a bakery. There was a great warm oven in which bread for the village of L'Armée and the surrounding farm-houses was baked between the hours of four and six in the morning. Peter carried

my valise and spread it upon the flour-bags, as comfortable a resting-place in that welcome warmth as ever I had known.

The pleasant, peaceful days of armistice came to a sudden bitter end. Stern orders from the General Staff ended "fraternization," and someone flung a bomb. The inferno recommenced and new types of bombs, minnenwerfer, and grenades nested themselves behind the breastwork, which possessed no protection against the back blow of either these missiles or that of shells. An operation, too, had been planned to take place on our right flank at the La Bassée Canal. There was no secrecy about it. Every peasant knew, and expected therefrom immediate deliverance from the pestilential interference with ploughing immediately behind our breastworks. One farmer at least, with complete indifference to the quarrel, neither of his seeking nor his making, would walk the furrows stolidly for hours behind a great white *percheron* as stolid as himself. His fields were never sown, but I think the Germans showed his attractive target a most kindly tolerance, though he had his warnings, and eventually, despite loud protestation, the old man was removed by British authority.

Batmen differed from each other in the exactness with which they fulfilled their offices. Scarcely a man had been trained to the duties of such service. All good fellows, my batmen in other walks had been an insurance clerk, a foundry worker, a gas-meter collector, and a silversmith ; and those four who succeeded each other, and fell away through wounds, are back at their old trades to-day, respectively in an office in Norwich, on Clydebank, in the streets of Tottenham, and in a Birmingham factory. For what qualities were they chosen ? I think, cheerfulness and an unassuming friendliness which took complete possession of the necessary, though often inconvenient, affairs of life. In such things Peter's service was priceless. No matter at what hour I would return to the cubby-hole for sleep, it was as dry and as warm as human ingenuity could devise. Eggs and small comforts he conjured from behind the lines without any promptings from me. He would drag the lice from a kilt by inserting in its



pleats a pronged fork heated in a brazier, while I made a neat report, or wrote instructions for the work after dark. He would arrange my notebok with carbons between its pages, clean my map instruments ; prepare a varied menu from interminable bread, plum-and-apple jam, and the sickly meat and vegetable ration. He would clean my limited wardrobe, wash and mend the socks and shirts, keep me supplied with tobacco, dry my boots and stockings. The batman was *multum in parvo* to his charge, omnipresent yet ubiquitous—"Where's my shaving water?" and it came steaming in a tin mug from which he had hastily thrown his own cup of tea. "I want to wash," and two hands beneath a bowed head would bear an empty biscuit tin filled with hot water which may have taken an hour's heating over the embers of recalcitrant coke, blown to red heat by a batman's lungs. "Find me some cigarettes." The batman would retire, take the last packet from his tunic, and return unselfishly smiling. And he would run when his officer went over the top, and fight by his side. When the officer dropped, the batman was beside him. When the batman dropped he must be alone.

The 93rd went back to the line on 28th February. Our rôle was to fire over the breastwork to occupy the attention of German infantry and gunners, while the operation to our right flank was carried out. We spent two days in preparation. This at last was battle, or so Peter, in the innocence of his heart, thought it. There would be the whole panoply of war—men, like leaden soldiers with rifles at the shoulder, firing over the breast-high battlements. He was greatly excited. My revolver was cleaned anew, his rifle glistened with oil under the pale sun, equipment cleaned, cheeks washed and rosy in the fresh air. I made a tour of the breastwork line, among which I moved bent double, lest a bullet should find my head. And Peter followed me with quick observation, and a reminder for any part in the instructions overlooked. The sergeants and corporals knew him. Often, unknown to me, he would go back, elucidate a point not fully grasped, and pass a wise hint to a defaulter, but he was discreet.

Then, on the 2nd March, the hour came, and we fired furiously and aimlessly. Not a head appeared as a target, yet bullets whistled past our ears or thudded in the sand-bagged emplacement. Men began to fall shot through the head. The empty futility of the performance caught some ; they sank their heads below the parapet and snapped their rifles in the air over the breastwork. I think this was wisdom, but my duty was to keep

the men erect. I ran up and down behind the breastwork prodding the men to sterner action and fiercer fire. A furious noise filled the air from our flank at La Bassée. Peter, spick-and-span, clean hose-tops, bright cap badge and buttons, brushed as if for guard at Edinburgh Castle, ran beside me, or stood, his eyes glowing in ecstasy beside the purring Vickers gun, the first in our possession. I ran to the telephone to tell them at battalion headquarters that we were wasting life and ammunition shooting at no visible enemy; and as I lifted the receiver, a loud crack stunned my ears. Peter fell quickly beside me, a smile still on his lips. I dropped the telephone; the sickening shooting still went on. I held his hands a moment as a soul winged its way from that horror. Then I covered him; there was nothing man could do. Peter had bidden me farewell.

Many philosophers have invested the quality of friendship with noble words. That of the batman expressed itself by little acts of vigilant kindness. Opportunities for the rendering of trifling services and for the doing of kindnesses were for ever present, every hour and every day. The batman's attitude was one of self-subordination, and he tarried neither to consider the worthiness of his charge nor the nature of the service asked. He gave freely, the man of humble origin and pursuit, to one at least temporarily exalted with authority. By his ready service, words, and gestures he won affection, by his forethought and unknown sacrifices he penetrated quietly and unobtrusively into the heart of the master of his goings and comings. And among such men Peter was incomparable—a paladin, the friend in need, the friend of perfection. I have no words with which to write an epitaph, neither poetry nor prose. I knew him as one incapable of fear, of stainless honour, sincere, modest, undefiled, unselfish, his mind a veritable garden of flower in which were blooms of matchless purity and fragrance, its paths overhung everywhere with the red roses of sacrifice.

I turn to my diary, written nearly fourteen years ago. "8th March. Bois Grenier. By night I carried a wreath, in the shape of a cross and some root plants, to Peter's grave. Under the walls of a little farm-house lies a little bullet-swept cemetery, filled with green mounds and white wooden crosses. The turf is torn by many shell-holes, and the air is rent with the sound of bullets; but when the tide of victorious battle has swept forward, in the quiet of a summer evening will the flowers close their eyes in prayer that peace may be with those poor lads who knew so

little of peace in death. And when the winter's storm robs the blossoms of their life, and as the flowers—those silent sentinels—droop at their post and die, so will the roots, taking firm hold, live and maintain the vigil. Even so the body dies, but the soul lives for ever."

I made amusing and harmless little sketches in the trenches, sending them for publication to *The Graphic*, which made use of them. In consequence, I was forbidden to write letters, even home, as a punishment for six weeks. That was while I was in charge of the Battalion's machine-guns, covering a wide front.

I found myself posted to Morton Hall, lying under the heather-covered Braid Hills, overlooking Edinburgh, in which was concentrated the Reserves, some thousands of men, recruits and returned wounded.

Though not for some weeks serving with His Majesty's Army in the field, I was immediately appointed as officer in charge of both musketry and machine-gun instruction. I was the only officer, among some hundreds, who had any knowledge whatsoever of the weapon which became decisive in infantry battle; and in addition to multitudes of young officers passing through the Depot to our own battalions, others from Scottish regiments in and around Edinburgh were sent to me for instruction.

But I was also entrusted with the task of delivering by night recruiting lectures in Edinburgh, Glasgow, in the Borders, and as far north as Aberdeen and Dundee. I prepared lantern slides from the many photographs which I had taken, and appeared as a very popular turn at the Alhambra Theatre in Glasgow, with David Devant, the Zanfrellas, the Versatile Four, and Maud Hughes, soprano vocalist. Here I first met John Smith Samuel, Permanent Secretary to the Lord Provosts of Glasgow. A book might well be dedicated to the sincerity of his friendship and written of his countless personal kindnesses to men who have served their country and have fallen by the wayside.

When, with two pipers to collect a crowd, I stood on Glasgow Green on a Saturday afternoon and addressed the hard-headed iron and steel workers of this grey city, I discovered that something more than an appeal to patriotism was necessary to bring even one recruit to the colours. They were in no way hostile to me personally; and I found myself with my mind and heart back again in the slums of Camberwell and in the Domain

of Sydney, prophesying a new era of social freedom for those who accepted service for the State.

"If," I said, "the State demands the responsibility of its citizens for its safety, then the State itself must accept responsibility in times of peace for the security of the individual citizen within its boundaries."

And though my vast audience of some thousand persons responded whole-heartedly to a political suggestion with which it found favour, with the exception of a few callow youths they resisted my appeal to come forward as volunteers for the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

With experience of certain of the mechanical and tactical defects of the machine-gun, I experimented with various improvements which I had designed. I had these manufactured in an iron-works in Edinburgh, the most important being an auxiliary hyposcope and firing-lever attachment. This gave control of the gun to a man firing two feet below its level, so that the gunner himself would be completely hidden and under cover while the gun was in action. He obtained a view of his target by sighting it through a series of tiny prisms fixed on to the back-sight, while instead of the thumb-piece for firing he had a lever and handle which gave him greater control over the gun.

So successful were my demonstrations that I was commanded to take my inventions to the Small Arms School, and exhibitions were given at Erith before experts from the War Office. I received a letter of thanks! Having been three times passed over for promotion, I applied immediately for release and for recommendation for promotion. The suggestion was coldly resisted, but Maxwell Rouse, who throughout had championed my cause, enabled me to secure an appointment in June as Brigade Machine-Gun Officer to the 100th Infantry Brigade of the 33rd Division, then completing its training on Salisbury Plain.

The Brigade was under command of General Twigg, retired from the Indian Army, a quiet man with the cultured mind of the best type of retired officer: the Division under that of Major-General H. J. Landon, who controlled its destiny up to the time of the disaster at High Wood, when he disappeared, having failed to leave any impress of his character or leadership among us. I spent much of my time with my groom, Bill Clegg, who stayed with me to the end of the War, trying to break in a foul-tempered chestnut horse. It appeared with hairy fetlocks, and,

though it could jump like a stag, the brute did not appear ever to have been saddled.

The Division was composed of New Army Units ; but after inspection by the Queen and drafting to France, it was reconstituted with my old Brigade, the 19th, and strengthened also by breaking up the 5th Brigade, so that in addition to the new battalions it possessed a leaven of seasoned troops.

It was a noteworthy fact that the 33rd Division was representative of not only the countryside and nearly every town in Great Britain, but was a combination of all the special qualities of the old Regular, Territorial, Special Reserve, and the New Armies. We had six Regular battalions, one Special Reserve battalion, and three battalions of the New Army ; while the Divisional Artillery and the Royal Engineers were also of the New Army. Of these battalions, the 1st and 5th-6th Scottish Rifles and 9th Highland Light Infantry represented Glasgow, the Lowlands of Scotland and the great centre of industry of the Vales of Leven and Clyde. The 93rd, 2nd Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, represented the Highlands and the countryside of Scotland ; and the 2nd Battalion Worcestershire Regiment, the 4th Battalion Suffolk Regiment, the 1st Battalion Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment, represented the counties and towns of rural England ; the 1st and 18th Battalions Middlesex Regiment and the 20th Battalion Royal Fusiliers contributed London ; the 2nd Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers gave us the hills and mines of Wales ; and the 16th Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps and the 4th Battalion King's (Liverpool) Regiment, the only Special Reserve Battalion which went to France, came from the Midlands and the northern industrial centre of England. This composition is remarkable, and to it may probably be traced the singular success and astonishing fighting qualities of the Division in every circumstance of war.

The Division arrived in France in September and began to go into the line beside the La Bassée Canal in October. No-man's-land by and around the Brick-stacks with its huge mine craters interested me vastly. Once I was arrested by a scared platoon of riflemen when I reappeared in their lines at dawn, and once very nearly shot out of hand. So the Staff Captain, under his signature, awarded me with a special pass under the Brigade Office Stamp. It read, "To all concerned. This officer is not a spy but the BMGO 100th Inf. Bde. AAA. He possesses an identity disc to this effect and is tattooed on the left forearm

AAA. His name is Captain Hutchison. A. and S. H. AAA." There was spy mania all along the La Bassée Road, the chemist's shop being the chief object of suspicion. In January however, the War Office at last sanctioned the formation of the Machine-Gun Corps, and I was sent back to Grantham, having now received my promotion to Captain, to take over command of the 100th Machine-Gun Company.

The camp at Grantham was indescribable chaos, thousands of men tumbling over each other through the mud of Lord Bradford's park, while dull-minded officers, most of whom had never seen a shot fired, and who were in command of the camp, drove the Company Commanders, ripe with experience from France, almost to lunacy. But my early enthusiasm for machine-guns, and the friendships which I had formed at Hythe, made me *persona grata* with "the powers that be"; and I was given *carte blanche* in the selection of the personnel of my company from thousands who were paraded one day for the purpose. My Sergeant-Major, known as "Scruffy," stood six foot three high and was a re-enlistment from the Guards. My Second-in-Command had experience in the ranks in France. Transport being of paramount importance, I looked around for a man who really understood horseflesh and discovered a Kentish lad, the son of a farmer, Bertie Hyland, who had been born to the saddle and brought up beside horseflesh. He was a beautiful lad with the face and complexion of a girl. The last I saw of him was at High Wood when, with murder in his eyes, alone he went forward, rifle in hand, to destroy a machine-gun nest.

The rank and file of the Company were comparable with that of the Guards in peace time. They stood six feet high to a man; and I chose them also so as to have a section from the north and another from the south of England, one from Scotland, and one from Wales, and in doing so I not only considered the special fighting qualities of the districts represented, but also the composition of the Division.

I brought my company back to the Division in January, and we occupied the intricate line at Guinchy, and the Brick-stacks at Cambrin. The fiat then went forth that the Machine-Gun Sections of Infantry Battalions should be transferred to the machine-gun companies. There was a very natural opposition on the part of the Battalion Commanders to parting with the cream of their battalions; and as the Captain of the Company, with the full support of my Brigadier, over and over again I

returned men who were sent to me, on account of their inefficiency and lack of physique. But the order was carried out to the letter.

Extract from a letter home : " Here we are back in the dismal land of mud, vermin, and inverted shaving-brushes for trees. *Quelle vie !* What a journey we had, too. But we weren't mined, though the poor hospital ship got, as you will have read. I am keeping my illustrated War Diary, ' Drivel from my dugout,' which will provide you with detail—after the War. Read *John Bull* : it's most inspiring ; and if you are sending cigarettes, Gold Flake Virginias. If you can't get these send ' Woodbines.' I'm off Turks, and these are all I smoke now and B.D.V. Tobacco. I am as usual in a shop, but not so comfortable as was the baker's. A lot of ' gunning ' going on. There is nothing to report."

The activities in this Sector were mostly confined to raids, mine-crater, and grenade warfare, and with tactical experimentation with the New Unit as part of a brigade and in co-operation with trench-mortar batteries, gas, and the new requirements of trench warfare. We concerned ourselves chiefly with practices in overhead fire from the Hertford Lane and Old Boots Trench, at a range of about 2000 yards. It was not a pleasant operation. The German gunners had these salubrious alleys registered to an inch, and no sooner did the machine-guns commence operations than a storm of " whiz-bangs " was invariably showered around our positions.

One June evening, just prior to a raid on a large scale planned for that night, in which also a monster mine would be sprung by us under the German Brick-stacks, a runner appeared with a message.

It was characteristic of many such. " Great British Naval Victory," I read. And then followed a recitation of the British ships sunk with all hands in the North Sea, including the *Queen Mary*. There was not added a single detail as to the loss inflicted on the German Navy or of what it was that contributed to such a victory. The message cryptically added, " Inform all ranks." This message was sent doubtless to give us a good heart in the carrying out of an extremely difficult and dangerous operation.

In early July 1916 the Division was moved down to the Somme area to take part in the great offensive battle. We detrained at Amiens, and marched through its streets, while the population ran beside us cheering, hanging garlands of flowers on our rifles,

and pressing bottles of wine into our haversacks. I saw no more flowers until we marched through the village of Locquignol on the edge of the Fôret de Mormal on the 3rd November, 1918, when in pressing back the retreating Germans in our final drive, the Mayor hung round my neck a chaplet of chrysanthemums. But we were the first British troops ever to have entered his village : and Amiens wearied even of profits.

We marched through this charming countryside, its roads hideous with gaunt tractors and an endless stream of motor lorries, up to Fricourt and spent the night of the 13th July bivouacked on the edge of the old German front-line system, while huge howitzers thundered above our heads ; and on the morrow we knew that we should go up the Valley of Death and be absorbed in the battle.

CHAPTER XI

HIGH WOOD

Going to battle—Emotions experienced—Gas and shell-fire—Bazentin—Zero hour—Carnage—All that was left—A bayonet charge—Capture of High Wood—Hallucination—Sleep.

THROUGH dust and heat and a myriad flies, the sweating Division wound its way through Fricourt. Hugging the side of the road to let pass the endless traffic of ambulances, horses, lorries, prisoners-of-war, water-carts, walking wounded, limbers, dispatch riders, food and fodder wagons which poured ceaselessly from the forward area, the column wriggled forward, stumbling and jostling while it exchanged familiar obscenities and blasphemies in jest, or in excretion, with those who passed down the valley towards Corbie and Amiens.

The foul stench of trench sanitation, broadcast by a week's bombardment, and the nauseating reek of blood from the carnage of the shattered defences of Fricourt, held the air. Chaos was everywhere. From amid the brickdust, twisted barbed wire, and ordnance and personal arms of all kinds, the serried ranks of artillery bellowed their challenge to the German defence in the valleys and hills of Bazentin, three miles farther east.

At the head of a company of machine-gunners, weary, my body soaked with sweat, face thick with dust and streaked with lines from perspiration which poured from beneath a steel helmet, I plodded forward, my orderly, Bill Clegg, at my side. My spirits were high : I had girded my loins for the attack ; and I think that something of the spirit of martyrs now dwelt in the soul.

The column crossed the German trench system early on the 14th July.

Up through the ruins of Montauban, where the enemy still grinned in his ghastly sleep, the Division wound its way along the pitted road. My eyes swept the bitter landscape, from a corner



A SKETCH OF THE BATTLEFIELD BETWEEN MARTINPUICH AND HIGH WOOD

The first attack upon High Wood and the Flers Line took place at 9.30 a.m. on the 15th July, 1916. It spread fan-wise towards the burning village and the Wood from the curve in the road below the windmill.

of which the shattered wooden crosses, in ragged disorder, beckoned to my disciplined and orderly spirit. The squat stump of an old fruit tree on the edge of a cemetery stripped of its leaves, curiously reminded me of a friendly veteran in the garden at Pinner.

My company was tried, had been refined. Sure. Sure as God made little apples . . . and here and everywhere death stalked. There would be no ripened fruit in the autumn. How many of the men who bravely stepped behind me would return ? How many in the presence of physical death were ready to put off this mortal body, as part of a wholesale massacre, limbs hurled hideously to the four winds, or crushed in the shambles of a dugout ? How many realized the fullness of spiritual life ?

I think I could read the thoughts of these untutored lads. The full tragedy of modern warfare was laid bare to the eyes of many for the first time. The ribaldry tossed from mouth to mouth was the camouflage for fresh horrors, which nearly every step revealed. The bloated carcasses of animals with distended stomachs lay in every ditch ; and each bend of the road multiplied the bodies mutilated beyond recognition, distorted from almost any semblance of human form lying everywhere unburied. Poor little apples : fear was in many hearts, fear of the unknown. The air reverberated with the thunder of bombardment. Great shells hurled themselves through the trees shorn of their summer splendour, torn and jagged, and buried themselves beneath the undergrowth of Mametz Wood, hard by the bitter road. A burnt-out ambulance and abandoned stretchers, soaked with blood now clotted brown and fly-blown, piled themselves beside lines and groups of English soldiers, who had perished before the spluttering fire of machine-guns, which for long hours had seemed riveted to the corners of the wood.

As the road met Caterpillar Valley, above which stood the lone tree mocking both sides of the battlefield, chalk-whitened guides cowered beside deep dugouts cut from the banks of the sunken road.

My Company passed up the gentle slope to Bazentin, lying bleak, its shattered walls, gaunt, pink-dusted ruins echoing with the unceasing chatter of machine-gun fire, and wound its way through woods in which wild strawberries still held their sweet greeting for the passer-by : while a fitful bombardment plunged indiscriminate shell-fire among the clattering bricks, from the

midst of which a splintered crucifix reared itself as the symbol of sacrifice.

It was noon. The Company spread itself in a ditch from which, across the valley through the dust and haze of the British bombardment, could be seen the leafy trees of High Wood, to the left flank the village of Martinpuich with its halo of pink brickdust, and to the south, Delville Wood, sprawling upon the hillside. And beside the wood, Waterlot Farm, the name familiar in all Flanders.

A runner, great beads of sweat on his brow, fear in his eyes, brought a message for me to report at brigade headquarters installed in a deep dugout, cut from the chalk of the hillside.

The valley had been filled with tear-gas. Men, presenting the appearance of hideous pantomime figures from a Tibetan passion play, groped with monstrous nose and eye-pieces. I, dragging my feet through rifles, coils of wire, boxes of bombs, and those mechanical contraptions which are the panoply of war, with smarting blood-scared eyes, joined the group of Battalion Commanders behind the blanket curtain. My Brigadier, Walter Baird of the Gordons, explained briefly that the Battalion deploying in the valley east of Bazentin, with the whole Division, was to attack at 9.30 the following morning. The objective was firstly High Wood and Martinpuich, and thence an unlimited field of advance through the city of Bapaume. The deployment ground was to be reconnoitred during the evening.

I returned to the Company, little better informed, but with a map, well marked with arrows pointing to the east. An unfortunate shell, during my absence, had killed one and wounded three men, one of whom I met upon the pathway, happy with men from other units with their "Blighty ones." Late in the afternoon, with my section commanders, I passed along the narrow road leading down to the valley, at the higher end of which, now wreathed in smoke, stood High Wood. For a few minutes I conversed with a major of Indian horse and learned that the cavalry were concentrating in Caterpillar Valley and would break through, so soon as High Wood was captured, and this, the last line of German defence, had been pierced.

The British artillery still continued its hurricane fire upon the wood, while observation officers directed it from vantage points in Bazentin. On my return, having viewed the ground for deployment, I questioned a gunner as to the enemy's disposition

and strength. "It's a cakewalk," replied the gunner. "Nothing can live there, my dear fellow, nothing can live there!"

During the night, patrols went out to make contact with the enemy. They were fired upon from the wood's edge and by riflemen lying out in scoops and in narrow trenches west and south of the village. They discovered that the Germans had laid out several strands of wire, uncut by the artillery, and, hidden by the long grass, forming a considerable and dangerous obstacle. The Brigadier was wrathful: repeatedly he requested a further bombardment, but such requests were made in vain or were not practicable. He fumed with anger, cursed the higher command through the bristles of a red moustache. As a sound tactician he was not unfamiliar with the results to infantry of a frontal attack against uncut wire, enfiladed by well-posted machine-guns.

"P.B.I.," I reflected, a sobriquet, so truthful: an infantry so soused in blood.

In the early morning, under cover of a thick mist, the 100th Brigade was deployed in the valley some eight hundred yards west of High Wood. A heavy dew was on the ground and hung like pearls upon each blade of grass. After the turmoil of the preceding night an eerie stillness pervaded the atmosphere. No shot was heard, except a faint echo from the flank.

Men spoke in whispers. Their faces were pallid, dirty, and unshaven, many with eyes ringed with fatigue after the night, hot and fetid, gaseous and disturbed by shell-fire, in Bazentin. Few there were whose demeanour expressed eagerness for the assault. They were moving into position with good discipline, yet listless, as if facing an inevitable. Their identity as individuals seemed to be swallowed up in the immensity of war: devitalized electrons. I, with my company, was deployed behind the Glasgow Highlanders, which with the 16th Battalion King's Royal Rifles was to lead the assault upon the wood. By 8.30 a.m. the Brigade had deployed into position and lay down in the long grass awaiting the signal to assault, timed for an hour later.

I passed the time, with dried blades of grass, chivvying the red ants and preventing them from crossing a narrow trench which I had scratched with a finger-nail. And I pencilled a sketch or two. It was restful and pleasant lying in the warm humid atmosphere, belly to the ground, in the quiet of the early morning.

I looked up suddenly. The mist was clearing, rising rapidly.

The sun peered through, orange and round, topping the trees of High Wood. Then its rays burst through the disappearing mists, and all the landscape, hitherto opaque and flat, assumed its stereoscopic vivid form. The wood seemed quite near, just above us up the hillside ; a little to the left behind a broken hedge was an abandoned German battery, dead gunners and horses around it. The village of Martinpuich, jagged ruins and rafters all askew, broken walls and shattered fruit trees, looked down. Both trees and village appeared Gargantuan, and the men awaiting to attack like midgets from Lilliput. From my cover, I scanned the landscape. Not a shot was fired. The men crouching in the grass must be visible to watchful observers in the wood, but all remained quiet. I glanced down at my watch. Ten minutes to go : the attack was timed for 9.30.

I could see the broad kilted buttocks and bronzed thighs and knees of the 9th H.L.I. lining the slope ahead of me. They were lying in regular lines. A wind seemed to stir the tall grass. My heart thumped in my throat. I raised my head as the Highlanders rose to their feet, bayonets gleaming in the morning sun. My eyes swept the valley—long lines of men, officers at their head in the half-crouching attitude which modern tactics dictate, resembling suppliants rather than the vanguard of a great offensive, were moving forward over three miles of front. As the attackers rose, white bursts of shrapnel appeared among the trees and thinly across the ridge towards Martinpuich.

For a moment the scene remained as if an Aldershot manoeuvre. Two, three, possibly four seconds later an inferno of rifle and machine-gun fire broke from the edge of High Wood, from high up in its trees, and from all along the ridge to the village. The line staggered. Men fell forward limply and quietly. The hiss and crack of bullets filled the air and skimmed the long grasses. The Highlanders and riflemen increased their pace to a jog-trot. Those in reserve clove to the ground more closely.

I, looking across the valley to my left flank, could see the men of the 1st Queen's passing up the slope to Martinpuich. Suddenly they wavered and a few of the foremost attempted to cross some obstacles in the grass. They were awkwardly lifting their legs over a low wire entanglement. Some two hundred men, Major Palmer at their head, had been brought to a standstill at this point. A scythe seemed to cut their feet from under them, and the line crumpled and fell, stricken by machine-gun fire. Those in support wavered, then turned to fly. There was no shred of

cover and they fell in their tracks as rabbits fall at a shooting battue.

Up the slope before me, the line of the attack had been thinned now to a few men, who from time to time raised themselves and bounded forward with leaps and rushes. I could see men in the trees taking deliberate aim down upon those who still continued to fight, or who in their scores lay dead and wounded on the hillside.

My orders were to move forward in close support of the advancing waves of infantry. I called to my company, and section by section in rushes, we were prepared to move forward. As we rose to our feet a hail of machine-gun bullets picked here an individual man, there two or three, and swept past us. I raised a rifle to the trees and took deliberate aim, observing my target crash through the foliage into the undergrowth beneath. On my right Huxley, commanding a section, had perished and all his men, with the exception of one who came running towards me, the whole of the front of his face shot away. On my left two other sections had been killed almost to a man, and I could see the tripods of the guns with legs waving in the air, and ammunition boxes scattered among the dead.

With my runner, a young Scot, I crept forward among the dead and wounded who wailed piteously, and came to one of my guns mounted for action, its team lying dead beside it. I seized the rear leg of the tripod and dragged the gun some yards back to where a little cover enabled me to load the belt through the feed-block. To the south of the wood, Germans could be seen, silhouetted against the skyline, moving forward. I fired at them and watched them fall, chuckling with joy at the technical efficiency of the machine. Then I turned the gun, and, as with a hose in a garden, sprayed the tree-tops with lead.

The attack of the Rifles and Highlanders had failed ; and of my own company but a few remained. My watch showed that by now it was scarcely ten o'clock. I hurriedly wrote a message reporting the position and that of the attack for the Colonel of the 2nd Worcesters, Pardoe, gallant soldier and good friend, who was in a sunken road with his battalion in reserve three hundred yards to the rear. I gave this to my runner.

"Keep low," I said, "and go like blazes," for the waving grass was being whipped by bullets, and it scarcely seemed possible that life could remain for more than a few minutes.

A new horror was added to the scene of carnage. From the

valley between Pozières and Martinpuich a German field battery had been brought into action, enfilading the position. I could see the gunners distinctly. At almost point-blank range they had commenced to direct shell-fire among the wounded. The shells bit through the turf, scattering the white chalk, and throwing aloft limbs, clothing, and fragments of flesh. Anger and the intensity of the fire consumed my spirit, and not caring for the consequences, I rose and turned my machine-gun upon the battery, laughing loudly as I saw the loaders fall.

I crept forward among the Highlanders and riflemen, spurring them to action, giving bullet for bullet, directing fire upon the machine-gun nests, whose red flashes and wisps of steam made them conspicuous targets. The shell-fire increased from both flanks, and the smooth sward became pitted and hideous, but as each shell engraved itself upon the soil, a new scoop of cover was made for the safety of a rifleman.

A Highlander, terror in his eyes, lay on his back spewing blood, the chest of his tunic stained red. I tore open the buttons and shirt. It was a clean bullet wound, and I gave words of encouragement to the man, dragging him to a shell cavity, so that in a more upright position he could regain strength after the swamping of his lungs, and then creep back to safety.

The dismal action was continued throughout the morning, German fire being directed upon any movement on the hillside. Towards noon, as my eyes searched the valley for reinforcements or for some other sign of action by those directing the battle, I descried a squadron of Indian cavalry, dark faces under glistening helmets, galloping across the valley towards the slope. No troops could have presented a more inspiring sight than these natives of India with lance and sword, tearing in mad cavalcade onto the skyline. A few disappeared over it : they never came back. The remainder became the target of every gun and rifle. Turning their horses' heads, with shrill cries, these masters of horsemanship galloped through a hell of fire, lifting their mounts lightly over yawning shell-holes ; turning and twisting through the barrage of great shells : the ranks thinned, not a man escaped. Months later the wail of the dying was re-echoed among the Himalayan foothills . . . "weeping for her children and would not be comforted."

I realized the utter futility of any further attempt to advance, and bent my energies to extricating such men as remained alive and unwounded from the battleground, now the point of con-

centration of gun- and machine-gun fire, upon which it was suicide to remain. During the advance I had noted a small chalk quarry, screened by a low hedge. My runner rejoined me with a youngster named Harris, and together we dismantled the machine-gun and after passing the word among those few, who survived, for withdrawal, with my Sergeant who laid strong hands on the ammunition boxes, we commenced the retirement to this position of better advantage.

Half-way down the slope a shell burst almost at our feet, tearing the tripod from my hands and throwing me face downwards. I rose immediately through the smoke. Harris, still clasping the gun to his side, both legs shattered and a stream of blood pouring from under his helmet, lay unconscious. We carried the broken body into the quarry. Tenderly we stripped the wounded lad's jacket, and cut away the blood-stained trouser-ends and puttees, removing the boots. We bound the broken legs with first-aid dressings and made tight tourniquets above the knees to prevent further loss of blood. Harris had served with me since the formation of the Company and had always been interesting. He was a dreamer and used to sit on the edge of my dugout at La Bassée and tell me of his dreams. Harris was half-way to Heaven; and though he had purged his soul for a celestial life, he was as good a gunner as ever I experienced.

"It's a miracle if 'e lives," said the Sergeant. "Those legs are pulp: they'll 'ave to come off." Many minutes passed, then Harris shuddered a little and opened his eyes. He winced, as in his recovering consciousness he sought to move, and the pang of pain shot up his body. Tears flooded his eyes as he realized his impotence.

"Hutchy," he whispered, one of those rare occasions in soldiering days in which a man addressed me by the familiar name by which I was known by the rank and file, "is it bad?"

I bent my ear to the strained words. "A smack in the legs, that's all, kid. Just stick it," I replied. "Then we will be able to get you down the line."

The wounded man smiled around him at the familiar faces, then closed his eyes.

There was nothing to do but wait.

Once I gazed across the edge of the quarry. Great shells plunged continuously upon the slope before me, the ceaseless rattle of musketry reverberated against the hillside, and echoed

among the ruins of Bazentin. Martinpuich and the wood were wreathed in smoke, shrouded in columns of dust. The stench of blood and of gas pervaded the hot atmosphere : it sickened the throat and caught the lungs tightly.

Death had cut swiftly with his scythe, and now his foul breath fanned the nostrils with the nauseating reek of blood, he winked his eye from aloft with each burst of shrapnel, and his harsh laugh chattered from the mouths of a score of machine-guns.

Half an hour passed, then Harris reopened his eyes. The brightness in them had departed.

"Give me some water," panted the wounded man. I pressed his emptying bottle to the lips, placing my arm around his shoulders. I was all too familiar with the look, in which the brightness of vitality was disappearing with the pallor which robbed the skin of its warm texture.

I pressed my forefinger to the pulse : its beats were slow.

Around the quarry the turmoil heightened in its fury. The ground heaved and shuddered : great tufts of earth were hurled through the air. The descending metal bore down upon the dead and wounded, grinding battered bodies to pulp, or throwing dismembered limbs high in the air.

Harris's face paled, his lips blue, and a troubled look came for a moment into his eyes ; then they brightened, an expression of ecstasy lighting the face. "Look . . . look . . . the Cross," he whispered. I glanced across the lip of the quarry, and the eyes of others crouching beside me followed my own. As it were suspended between Martinpuich and High Wood there appeared to be a brilliant light with wide wings shaped like some giant aeroplane. It hovered above the scene of carnage. The radiant light became more definite in shape, unmistakably a cross. A shiver passed through the wounded man's body. For a moment he clung tightly to me, then the whole body relaxed. I glanced down quickly. Death looked from the eyes of a machine-gunner, but a smile lay on the blood-flecked lips.

The fall of shells had suddenly ceased on our immediate front. As the area previously had been a maelstrom of explosives, so now, except for wisps of smoke hovering above the shell-holes, and bitter cries of the few wounded who still miraculously had survived the bombardment and now whimpered piteously for aid, or screamed in delirium and with hysteria, all was calm. The light still persisted.

Sergeant Barnes, my remaining N.C.O., a realist always, spoke. "A new stunt by the Staff. Damned good one this time. . . . Bloody sight better than cavalry."

But on our immediate front all for a moment was quiet, and after surveying the landscape I said grimly, "We're going on now, Sergeant."

"That's good, sir : been in this 'ole long enough for the good of our 'ealth."

"Tighten up your belts, lads," I ordered. "We are going to advance in short bounds. After the first rush, take cover beside a casualty. Fill up with his ammunition and iron rations. I will give you a few minutes for that . . . then on. We are going for the wood. Between each rush take good cover . . . are you ready ? . . . right, come on !"

Forty-one men, remnants of three regiments, rushed over the lip of the quarry and ran swiftly forward through the long dried grass. Not a shot greeted us. I, disciplined warrior, every sense alert, threw myself beside the equipment which still clung intact to the torso of a Highlander, stripped almost naked and splashed with the blood which had poured from the distorted figure. I snatched the clips of ammunition, thrusting them into my pouches, and ransacked the haversack for rations. The water-bottle had been pierced and drained. With the aid of elbows and toes I wriggled forward to another figure lying face down to the ground, unslung the water-bottle, hot in the blazing sun, and added it to my equipment. I glanced round me : some men were ready, crouching like cats, heads sunk in cover behind the dead or in shell-pits, others completing their task. I raised my head slowly and viewed the wood. The storm of battle, shrapnel, machine-gun and rifle-fire, still raged on either flank, while German heavy shells crashed in Pozières and Montauban.

The tree-tops of the Bois de Foureaux, once safe harbour for pigeons, giving shade to peasant lovers, now the High Wood of battle, murder and of sudden death, hung as crazy scarecrows, their broken branches waving in mockery. They assumed fantastic human form, buffoons on stilts, the leaves, at the twig ends, a feathery motley with which to crown man's vengeance upon Nature at the zenith of her summer glory. From a birch hung the limp body of a too-daring sniper, the beheaded trunk like a flour-sack caught in the fork of a branch, while blood had poured down the silver surface of its trunk, whereon it had silted,

black and obscene. I offered a prayer and a curse, brief, the gasp of an overwrought soul, for my little band of followers.

Then I rose. With a swift rush we swept forward, the softness of bodies yielding to our step. A wounded man called to me, his plaintive wail tearing the heart. I dammed the source of my compassion, and set myself to the purpose of the moment, then again dropped for cover and rest. No shot was fired. A third rush. The party on its narrow front in a thin irregular line was within forty yards of the wood's edge. I whispered the words to left and to right, "Fix bayonets." Once more my lads rose from the blood-soaked fields in a mad rush.

If there had been any martyr in my soul it had turned beast in the Pantheon of this modern Ephesus. I was murderer, breath coming in short gasps, teeth set, hands clenched round my rifle, nerves and sinews tense with life. "An eye for eye, a tooth for tooth." Four German soldiers raised their arms in surrender. I could hear the breath of Sergeant Barnes coming in deep snarls beside me. I crashed through the undergrowth, rifle and bayonet levelled to the charge, my great strength and weight gathered behind the thrust. A man, bearded and begrimed with battle, crumpled before my bayonet. The Sergeant pierced another as a knife goes through butter. A soldier, his arm broken, cowered back against a machine-gun, hands raised, face blanched with terror. With a cry he turned to run. I thrust with my bayonet at the full extent of a strong arm. The man stumbled and fell back, his weight dragging the rifle from the hand of his slayer.

I glanced about me, a stick-bomb in hand. The three Germans lay awry and huddled at my feet, and my men were now extended in a narrow trench a few yards within the wood. Other Germans stood to a flank, making overtures of surrender; and then came forward. Someone threw a bomb, then others. The Germans fell spattered with blood, lacerated and hideous. The blood-thirsty battle fury in me died down as I wiped the sweat from my eyes. I looked to the skies: the light which Harris has made me see had gone. Hypnotism, hallucination, self-deception, insanity? I wonder.

I dropped for cover as a German stick-bomb sped through the tree-stumps. German shells were falling anew in the valley to the rear. Behind Bazentin the sun was sinking in a blood-red sky, a fitting epitaph to its day.

Quickly the trench was reversed, and the German machine-



A GERMAN PRISONER-OF-WAR, BOVINE AND COMPLACENT
Sketched by the Author near Fricourt, Somme, 1916.

gun manned and placed in position to ward off any counter-attack. I wrote a short message, giving my position, and handed it to a lad, whom I chose as runner to Brigade Headquarters.

Something was astir in the minds of the General Staff behind. A shrapnel barrage descended on the farther edge of the wood. My men and I were isolated, marooned in this distant corner of the no-man's-land of battle. Perhaps our advance had been seen by the watchers from the road in Bazentin. Dusk fell. Again and again I tapped out a brief message from my flash-lamp to the trees and ruins in rear. "S O S" I spelt, "S O S." My party, cold in the night air with the dampness of sweat which had soaked their bodies, ate their frugal rations, greedily drank from the abandoned water-bottles of the enemy and waited in vigilant watch. After two hours, the familiar jangle of equipment was heard. Men were moving up the valley towards the wood. I flashed again my lamp. A cry came: then many men. Relief. Soon I was among Welch Fusiliers, and others from Manchester, men fresh from divisional reserve. They had orders to send back any of my brigade.

Forty-one men who had witnessed a miracle went back in file across the valley littered with dead. Released now from the strain of the vigilance which had held death at bay, we stumbled with fatigue in the paling light. Stretcher-bearers moved, turning over the fallen to discover if any yet lived, lifting the wounded, giving succour to those whose vitality had so ebbed that they could never withstand the renewed agony of the long journey down the road already dubbed "The Valley of Death." We reached Bazentin, in which high explosive still fitfully burst with loud detonation and which reeked of the sickly sweetness of gas. The Brigade Staff Captain, Ward-Brown, wounded a few minutes later, stood on the road. He peered at me. "Who are you?" he asked.

"Hutchison," I replied.

"Had a rough time?" he queried. "Have you come from High Wood? Was it you who sent through the runner?"

"Yes," I replied. "Glad the kid got through."

"All right, take your party down to Brigade Headquarters—bottom of the hill on the left. Rum issue!" he called to the men; and to me he added, "General Baird wants to see you. Well done!"

We passed on down the valley. I was back again, a return to the dugout at which orders for the attack had been issued but

twenty-four hours earlier. Eleven only of the forty-one men now with me belonged to my company: the others, stragglers from three regiments, the flotsam of a lost generation, survivors of a disaster, and living witnesses of revelation.

I passed down the timbered stairway to the Brigadier's headquarters. I stooped, entering the dugout, and momentarily was blinded by the flickering lights which threw weird shadows against the chalk-hewn white of the walls. The General with two staff officers was studying a map. He looked up quickly as I—ghastly figure of the modern gladiator—saved from the jaws of death, unshaven, heavy-eyed, begrimed, blood-stained, stood before him. I saluted. "Captain Hutchison," I said hoarsely.

The Brigadier tipped his peaked hat on his head and glanced at me with those vivid blue eyes, which in sharp contrast to the red hair seemed so brilliant, magnetic, and inspiring in a commander. Deep lines shadowed his keen face, but the set mouth curved a trifle and the eyes were beacons of welcome.

"Sit down, Hutchison," invited the General, pouring out a stiff whisky. "Drink that."

The strong spirit smote the back of my throat, and I gulped it gratefully.

"Relief all right?" questioned the General. I nodded my assent. "You've done very well . . . very well. I did not think it possible to reach High Wood. How many men were with you?"

"Forty-one, sir. They are all back now."

I stared at the table for a moment, fingering an unlighted cigarette nervously. The General thrust a candle towards me. I still remained silent, staring at the light, then put my cigarette to it and inhaled a whiff of smoke.

"What was the light over High Wood, sir?" I said, intently watching the General who looked perplexed. "Like an aeroplane . . . just before we went forward . . . that was at 5 p.m. . . . stopped the shells . . . not a shot was fired when we attacked. We got into High Wood without the loss of a man."

A look of astonishment crossed the General's face. "You are tired out, Hutchison," he exclaimed. "You will remember everything in the morning." He refilled my glass. "You had better sleep now. The Staff Captain has arranged for that and you will find your men in the dugouts just outside."

I withdrew unsteadily, my senses doped with fatigue, and then lay down to sleep.

HIGH WOOD

171

AWARDED THE MILITARY CROSS

London Gazette, 25th August, 1916.

Captain Graham Seton HUTCHISON, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, attached Machine-Gun Corps.

For conspicuous gallantry in action at the German Switch, France, on the 17th-18th July, 1916.

It was largely due to his fine example that his machine-gun company rendered conspicuous service under most trying conditions.

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CHAPTER XII

“OH, IT’S A LOVELY WAR!”

Christmas 1916—Drunkenness—Some officers and their occupations—*Good-bye to all that*—Jocks and Fusiliers—The critic of battalions in action—The Basis for right judgment—2nd Battalion Worcestershires—The hell of winter—To hospital with a false diagnosis—Spotted fever.

“OH! it’s a lovely war!” sang the soldiers as they trailed down the road through Bray and Morlancourt. We were being withdrawn for rest and reorganization after endless attacks against High Wood, Delville Wood, Le Transloy, and Les Bœufs, battle, murder, and sudden death. Of my company, with little Maxwell, a babe from the Scottish Rifles, and my orderly, Bill Clegg, and Peter Dean, I was the only one who had remained from the beginning.

The Divisional Commander had been superseded by one who was to become my friend, the man to whom I am all-devoted, Reginald Pinney of the Royal Fusiliers. Not one single one of the battalion commanders, with the exception of old Pardoe, remained; and only one brigadier, Baird, unconquerable either by the inefficiency and stupidity of the staff or by shell-fire, remained with us. Of my company some dozen stout fellows, “Scruffy,” the sergeant-major, a City policeman, and others well decorated for gallantry in the field, still were with me and gave leaven to the whole.

We went to an old manor farm-house beside Picquigny on the Somme; and every time now that I travel to Paris, I gaze from the train windows at the redecorated hulk of this great mansion which provided cover, rest, and warmth for the best Christmastide I have ever experienced.

A vast cellar ran throughout the foundation of the building, and this we decorated with fir and yew, and erected in its centre a Christmas tree, on which I hung gifts for every officer and man, purchased during a trip to Amiens with the mess cart.

It is a fashionable libel to suggest that those who fought in the

War expended their time between intoxication and the brothels of any French town in the neighbourhood. Our Christmas party was a man's affair. We had two barrels of beer and we all got most gloriously drunk; a happy Christmas spent in hilarious oblivion to the facts of death so hideous from which we had so recently emerged. But in battle I saw only once a drunken officer, was a witness of his court martial, and he was reduced to the ranks; and in the line I never saw a drunken soldier. I shall remain sad with the tragedy that those who might best defend the honour of British soldiers in the field, namely, the regular officers who had inherited the military and regimental tradition, have remained silent, while some others, seeking the profits of a "best-seller" by committing themselves to any filthy slander, have bombarded the memory of those fallen and those who survive with filthy verbiage.

Many of those whose profession, like mine, had been that of a soldier had scuttled to the base camps after the first disagreeable surprises of Mons and Le Cateau. They had not bargained for shell-fire and massed machine-guns, in fact had so far failed to contemplate their possibility as practically to omit their inclusion in the British armies, and found them increasingly terrifying.

Such little spleen as these possessed had been dissipated as lounge lizards, in poodle-faking at gymkhanas, with appearances as tailors' dummies at levees, and in courting the lesser lights of the variety stage, who laughed in their sleeves or in the fripperies of such slender garments as they might be wearing, at these noodles whose only assets were brushed-up moustaches, pomaded hair, and their triumphant sartorial decorations. It had never been done—to talk shop—so the business of war was transacted by clerks and shop assistants, by peasants, plumbers, barbers, machine-minders, colliers, in fact by any except those paid by the State.

With the exception of strong-minded, great-hearted men who led famous regiments and brigades, and shared peril in the face of fearful odds with their men, the officers whose names appeared in the Army List had promoted themselves as a mutual admiration society to field rank, and had elected themselves to organize and administrate the greatest battles and the largest armies the world had ever known. As super sanitary supervisors and incinerator inspectors, controllers of delousing stations and washhouses, no matter how menial the job, provided that it was beyond the reach of gunfire, these obsequious flunkies performed

their perfunctory offices. And the temporary gentlemen, whom they openly ridiculed within their clubs, safe sanctuaries from the intrusions of those to whom they referred in execrable French as not knowing the "*comme il faut*," led the men, who upon the printed pages of the Army List were properly entrusted to themselves.

And they would preen themselves before admiring ladies with hair-raising stories, borrowed from batmen, posted home as unfit for active service, shattered in limb and in mind ; and would pirouette in blushing boots and shiny spurs, with gold braid on their hats, bright tabs, red, blue, green, on their facings, and on their hearts the multi-coloured ribbons of decorations filched from the fighting forces.

The work of sanitation could have been better supervised by a gang of plumbers, and that of washing for soldiers by a handful of Acton laundry women ; while in the immense departments of the Quartermaster-General, responsible for supply and catering, rather than innumerable persons tumbling over one another in confusion, from which troops and animals suffered the pangs of hunger—though men learnt that stewed stinging nettles make good spinach, and mules could find sustenance in halter ropes and in the tail-boards of limbers—the managing director of almost any tinpot company, or a head waiter, described by the dolts as a "dirty dago," could have achieved comfort with simple efficiency.

There was seldom an "Ack ack and quack" without his *croix de guerre*, or a "Base wallah" without his motley of medals.

And these fungus growths flourishing far behind the lines, despite eternal leave of absence in Paris or in London, must find preoccupations as the camouflage for business, and fresh outlets for themselves and for their friends. So Army Forms multiplied. Schools and courses for this, that, and the other, mushroom in growth, grew along the pleasant seaboard of the Normandy coast, where variously were employed meaty men in white sweaters, who though they had never suffered attack or defence, with deep-throated cries urged tried N.C.O.s to greater ferocity with the bayonet. And there were young officers, who flicked their perfectly putteed calves with riding switches, as they strutted in the "bull-ring," dealing out torment and punishment to boy recruits and returned wounded as the whim, or the weather, or the last evening in Le Touquet prompted their playful minds.

An efficient, experienced officer or N.C.O. was selected for special harrying at the hands of these military midwives. Efficiency was the object of biting scorn, experience the butt of obscene jest. And where a temporary officer was discovered as an industrious leader, who by confidence, love, and fellow-feeling understood how to work out the problem of economic and social relations with his comrades, the solicitude which he showed for his men, making of them sometimes martyrs and always brave souls, was selected for loathsome libels and mendacious slanders by those, who like dogs ran from pillar to post



sniffing for nauseating muck, as fitting matter for mutual intellectual refreshment after the day of toil.

These vindictive war-losers discovered it a safe and cheap revenge upon the brave to get back by the anonymous act of an unsatisfactory report.

If these skulkers possessed any capacity for anything it was to be found in eyewash and in window-dressing, in humbug and mealy-mouthedness, in bestowing the Judas kiss upon those who seemed too strong, in dissembling before Allied diplomats and potentates in the hope of collecting favours, which was not inappropriate in the case of washermen and other menials desiring to pick up tips, and in genuflecting before political wire-pullers and courtesan commanders.

Oh ! it was a lovely war ! And as a tip for the next one, stick to the front line. It's far healthier, and despite rats and lice cleaner too. Thank God for the life of Lord Haig, the Commander who in military genius and in human understanding towered above the pettiness of so much which lay between him and those who stood to his command with their "backs to the wall."

Robert Graves, whom no doubt I met during 1916 in some muddy alley or frowzy dugout, recently created quite a sensation, especially in Scotland, by alleging in his *Good-bye to all That* that his Colonel, who I think was Crawshay, said to his Company Commanders on the eve of the 19th July before a further attack between High Wood and Delville Wood, "The Public Schools Battalion are in support if anything goes wrong. I don't know if we shall be called on ; if we are it will mean that the Jocks have legged it. As usual," he added, "the Public Schools Battalion is, well, what we know, so if we are called for, that means it will be the end of us." And Graves tells us that they all laughed. Later on he continues that some brigade major whom he met in hospital, in the last week of July after both were wounded, said "The Public Schools Battalion came away as soon as it got dark ; and so did the Scotsmen. Your chaps were left there alone for some time. They steadied themselves by singing. Later, the chaplain—R.C., of course—Father McShane, brought the Scotsmen back."

I hold no special brief either for the 20th Royal Fusiliers (Public Schools Battalion), so called because it was more or less such when first formed, or for the Scottish Rifles ; but I was an intimate witness of the whole of these operations, possess experience of the behaviour of all battalions in the Division right up to the Armistice, and am also the historian of the Division and have had access to a great many war diaries as well as possessing a memory vividly clear.

I believe Robert Graves' memory to be at fault when he alleges that his Colonel made any such remark, and if the Colonel did so it was one of prejudice of which he should be heartily ashamed, for he must have known that it would be repeated. Of course, the implication was quite untrue. It passes my comprehension also how a brigade major, except possibly that of the 19th, Graves' own brigade, could have observed the 2nd R.W.F.s "shaking out into artillery formation, and remaining singing in the wood, while the Manchester boys of the Royal Fusiliers and the Jocks legged it."

Two years ago, at the request of Sir Reginald Pinney, Colonel of the Royal Fusiliers, having been an eyewitness throughout all the Divisional assaults on High Wood, one of which in detail I have described, I performed the office of making an oration at Hounslow Barracks, the Depot of the Royal Fusiliers, on the occasion of the unveiling of the wooden cross which had been brought over from High Wood, where later, after the battle, it had been erected to the memory of the men of the Royal Fusiliers who fell in the battle.

I said “A message was received that the Commander-in-Chief attached the greatest importance to the capture of the wood ; and General Mayne flung the 20th Royal Fusiliers into the battle. Despite most heavy casualties, both from shell- and machine-gun fire, the Royal Fusiliers, supported by the 2nd Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers, with great steadiness and courage, and sticking to their task, in keeping with the Albuhera tradition, fought on until the whole wood was in our hands. No one knows how men fought, how they died, what deeds of gallantry were performed, or by whom. The area of the battle was thick with dust and smoke. I was an eyewitness of the attack, and knowing the difficulties knew also what utmost courage, selflessness, and tenacity must have been displayed. Thus did the 20th Battalion of your regiment, under conditions which, to those who have not witnessed modern warfare, beggar description, respond to the finest characteristics of Englishmen and sustain the traditions of your regiment. To these the High Wood Cross here unveiled, for all time will bear witness.”

The facts are indisputable ; and if further evidence were needed it is to be found in the casualty lists, for the 20th Royal Fusiliers lost more officers and men in this battle than did any other battalion engaged in it.

The 19th Brigade possessed two Scottish battalions, one the regular 1st Cameronians, the other a Territorial, the 5th Scottish Rifles. I never knew the latter battalion to fail ; and while for almost two years it was under the command of Colonel Spens, its quality was equal to that of any battalion in the Division. Of the 1st Cameronians I would not speak so certainly, for it suffered that peculiar disadvantage, sustained by most regular battalions, namely constant change in its command and leadership. Commanding officers of regular battalions for the most part remained but a few months, and sometimes only for weeks, until they were promoted to staff appointments or in command

of brigades ; and many of them cared little for the battalions which they were privileged to lead, and expended themselves to the utmost in wangling jobs away from the line. But when for brief periods the Cameronians were well led, as happened, for example, in Scottish Wood in May 1918, or in the attack on Meath Post in September of the same year, they acquitted themselves with magnificent heroism.

The critic of battalions in action in a world war must bear constantly in mind that though men from different localities and engaged in the mass in various civil occupations do possess characteristics especially their own, it is the leader himself, the commanding officer for the time being, who determines finally the fighting quality of the troops whom he leads. The criticism of a battalion in action is one not of the troops themselves but of the man who commands them. And in making any comparison between the Royal Welch Fusiliers and the Cameronians, it must be remembered also that the rank and file of both of these battalions consisted for the most part of coal miners, who throughout the world, as I happen to know from a very large experience of miners, possess common characteristics and peculiarities which segregate them from the average of a working-class community.

In my considered judgment, serving with this Division in every battle action from the day upon which it was constituted in France until after the Armistice, I do not consider that the Royal Welch Fusiliers was by any means its best battalion, and for the reasons which I have given. Neither do I judge that the 1st Cameronians, nor the 2nd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, for the same reasons, lived up to their historical traditions, though the latter regiment, with first-class Company Commanders, many of them promoted from the ranks, and in the latter days of the campaign with the brilliant Adjutancy of a clever youth, McMillan, regained more than once its titular right to be described as "The Thin Red Line." I have in mind especially the actions on the 23rd May, 1917, when Captain Henderson and Sergeant-Major Todd were completely cut off by the enemy, and, to extricate themselves, made a bayonet charge on a large body of the enemy, capturing 240 prisoners of the 61st German Division, and on the Menin Road on the 26th September of the same year, when a company, entirely cut off and surrounded, held its ground for long hours against repeated counter-attacks on Fontaine les Croisilles.



THE PLACID WATERS OF DICKEBUSCH LAKE, NEAR YPRES, OFTEN LASHED TO FURY
BY SHELL AND MACHINE-GUN FIRE

From a water-colour sketch by the author, made in May 1918, when, despite the torments of gas and *brömmel feuer*, springtime redecorated the stark tree-trunks with tender green foliage.

But the 1st Queen’s (R.W.S.), long under the command of white-haired Crofts, with his able henchman Avery, failed only once. The 1st Middlesex, led with passionate devotion by old man Elgee, a regular officer with thirty-five years’ regimental service; the Glasgow Highlanders (9th H.L.I.), a Territorial battalion, commanded for over two years by A. H. Menzies, and the 4th Militia Battalion of the King’s Liverpool Regiment, commanded for two years by E. M. Beall, the type of man who took his troops over the top in his shirt-sleeves, were incomparably the best battalions in the Division.

There was one exception. Throughout the history of the War whether in the front line, or playing the fool in billets; whether in attack or defence; whether absorbed as part of a major operation on a wide front, or conducting an isolated raid or attack on its own; whether grimly holding part of a long line, or desperately fighting as in Neuve Eglise Church, completely surrounded by hordes of the enemy; whether the consideration be of officers or men, of their contribution to sport, amusement, ceremonial parade, or to the *esprit de corps* of the whole Division, without hesitation I give the palm to the 2nd Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment.

And this is perhaps the highest tribute which can be paid by a Scot to Englishmen. The fact no doubt is something to do with the special character of what this county produces in its race, but in large measure also it was due to the consistent good leadership of T. K. Pardoe, an amiable, quiet man, possessed of tremendous human understanding and matchless courage; to his Adjutant, Fox, who was killed on the Menin Road; to Sergeant-Major Crowe, afterwards commissioned with a Victoria Cross; and not least to a certain padre, who, though by the Geneva Convention he should not have done so, fought like a wild cat in the church of Neuve Eglise, chucking bombs with the best from its windows, and shooting a revolver from the verger’s door.

The 2nd Worcesters, from 1914 to 1918, held a position unchallengeable in the military history of the British race. And, for the reasons which I have given.

But in assessing the merit of fighting units I always have uppermost in mind that great fighter who led the Brigade in which were the 2nd Worcesters, 1st Queen’s, the Glasgow Highlanders, and the 16th K.R.R.C.—Walter Baird.

It would be wearying, except in a military history, to record

the detail of the fighting in October, November, and December around the Flers line and in the trenches named Hazy, Brimstone, Angostura and Bitters. The lowering sunless skies and the torrents of rain, the extreme difficulty of getting back wounded across the ground on which it was almost impossible for an armed man to move himself, let alone carry a wounded comrade, the heavy casualties incurred, and the difficulties of supporting even life itself, I shall never forget. The horror of the day spent in shallow, waterlogged trenches under unceasing fire was even surpassed at night when the full fury of the German guns was let loose.

I literally wept with anguish when a gunner returning from one of my posts informed me that two of my sergeants, survivors from the beginning, and a man had completely disappeared. I searched for them the whole night, and again the following evening, it being impossible by day even to raise one's head. But I could find nothing. Finally we identified a leg, and one of his section swore that this was the leg of Sergeant McClellan. He recognized the lacing of the boot. I wrote to the lad's mother ; and it was not until after the War that I learned that he had been wounded, and crawling in the wrong direction had been captured and taken prisoner. Men disappeared into the night : one knows not to this day their fate, whether destroyed by shell-fire or swallowed up in the yawning shell-holes, stifled with mud and water, gripped and paralysed with cold and wounds.

The sole duckboard track was broken up or sunken beneath the oozing surface of the ground. Boots were torn from the feet of men held fast in the octopus grip of the mud. Exhaustion became a plague. Horses and mules remained to die stuck fast in their tracks. Wagons were abandoned and became the sport of shells. Lieutenant Bennett of the Worcesters gained a Victoria Cross for struggling forward a few hundred yards, and with his company squatting like ducks in the mud. No man ever more richly deserved it.

Immediately following our joyful Christmas, we returned to the line, taking over from the 17th French Division. General Lancrenon occupied a P.C., surrounded by his dead, and he left behind him, not only good maps and plans, but also "a warning concerning a mysterious dog which visited a cellar in Clery full of dead Boches, and a complete telephone exchange," used by the dog or Boches (?). We never discovered which. I had

scarcely taken over my posts, when five prisoners were brought in to give themselves up. When I informed them that we were English, they immediately kissed each other, and before I could myself evade such a display of affection I was myself kissed by five Russians. No doubt a unique experience, for under the present regime I think it improbable that a moujik would incur the risk of demonstrating his affection for any one of the British race.

Fortunately, a heavy frost, followed by snow and again by hard frost, set in during this period and lasted well into February. Our lines lay hard beside the River Somme, and part of our defences were situated in Ommiecourt Island, inhabited alone by two sections of my machine-gunners. Before the frost I could only visit these at night, or at considerable risk by running along a floating plank bridge, while a German field-gun sniped at me; but after the frost, since the river was frozen hard, I had its full expanse for my excursions.

They called me "The Mad Major." There were I think two others so called—the airman who skimmed the lines at dawn hosing German breakfasts with his machine-gun, and the one who ruled the "Bull-ring" at Etaples. I saw the former. If the latter existed I wish I had met him in the south-east corner of High Wood on the 15th July, 1916. Kenneth Alford, whose real name is F. J. Ricketts, who composed such familiar Marches as "Colonel Bogey" and the "Vanished Army," dedicated his march, "The Mad Major," to myself. I am proud indeed of the honour, but would gladly share the honour with the airman. Someone else must compose a *Danse Macabre* and dedicate it to the governor of the "Bull-ring."

I decided one night to make a reconnaissance of the German lines across the ice. In order to ensure against mishap I was secured with a telephone wire and was accompanied by a private soldier. This man, unfortunately for himself, decided to fall through a shell-hole in the ice and was salvaged half drowned. I went a good long way quite happily; until a flare was fired from the German line, when I decided it was prudent to sit down, especially since a machine-gun began fitfully to whip the surface of the ice with bullets. Finding, however, that there was no longer a continued pull on the cable my good men at the other end decided that I must have become a casualty, jerked the cable taut, and I found myself slithering across the ice back home again. No sooner had I succeeded in getting on my feet

than another jerk came upon the hawser and I tobogganed across the ice, on my way being immersed in water in the various shell-holes which had pitted the surface of the ice. When I reached Ommiecourt I was suffering from a very bad chill.

Like a great many men who are never sick or sorry, when smitten with a cold, indigestion, or some trivial complaint, I felt that I was about to die. A strange disease suddenly manifested itself. My skin was covered with a rash, around the red indentations of which spread small white weals. The Medical Officer, an American gentleman from a small rising town in the Middle West, whose previous activities had specialized in midwifery, had diagnosed "trench fever," the ominous nomenclature for a host of illnesses of obscure origin whose only symptom was a high temperature.

The Brigadier, Baird, returning from an early morning visit to the frigid fastnesses of what was termed the line, thrust his head into the dugout. "Good God, Hutchison!" he said. "What the devil's the matter with you?"

So far as I was concerned, the General's remark ushered in the undertaker. "I think, sir, I'm going to die," I breathed. "Well, don't do it here," laughed the Brigadier. "You'd better go to hospital."

My limbs were cramped with ague; I resigned myself to cruel fate. "Porter," I said to the attentive batman, who had followed me through two years of varying war. "We're going to hospital. Send for the M.O."

The doctor was seated over a poisonous brazier in the adjoining dugout, which he shared with the stretcher-bearers, exaggerating his earlier and intimate experiences to men unwise to the products of love. "The Major's going to hospital," he said. "The General's been in and told him not to die here, so he wants a certificate."

"Holy gee, death certificate, is it? Sure I'll fix him right now."

The doctor examined me. Temperature 101.6—a safe diagnosis, fever. As night fell I was packed into a stretcher, the thoughtful Porter placing empty whisky-bottles filled with boiling water at my feet and sides, and then the procession squelched down the communication trench to the road amid the ruins and brickdust of a once village, where was waiting a motor ambulance. They slid the stretcher on to its shelf inside. Porter climbed in and the ambulance rumbled over the shell-pitted

cobbles of the disabled street and soon was speeding over the undulating downs towards the fever hospital at Heilly. No one greeted me upon my arrival, no kindly doctor, no cheerful nurse.

"Whatcher got in 'ere, mate?" inquired an orderly. "Fever case—orficer—got a batman wiv 'im," replied the driver.

The orderly peered into the back of the ambulance. "Give us an 'and to shift 'im," he said. "The 'orspital's full up. We'll put 'im in a bell tent for the night. The M.O. can see 'im in the mornin', and send 'im to the proper ward. We've got all sorts 'ere—fexious and non-fexious cases—we 'as to be careful not to mix 'em up." They lifted the stretcher and carried it across the field, threading their way through a number of large marquees in which dimmed lights burned dismally, and came to an isolated bell tent in which was an iron bedstead. A clinging frosty mist embraced the landscape. The orderly disappeared while I, aided by my batman, divested myself of my uniform and clad my feverish body in the hospital pyjamas provided by a thoughtful General Staff. I shivered as I crept between the cold sheets. A moment later the orderly reappeared with an oil lamp and a rubber hot-water bottle. He examined the label on the stretcher: "Major Hutchison—Fever."

"Don't say much, do it, sir?" said the orderly.

"The damned fool didn't know much," I exclaimed peevishly. The orderly produced the thermometer with which to silence any further expected compliments to the medical service and peered closely at my exposed chest. He stepped back quickly. "'Oly Gawd!" was all he uttered, snatching the thermometer quickly from my mouth. The warmth and comfort had cheered me to a happier frame of mind.

"Well, what's my temperature?" I asked.

"Only an 'undred now," replied the orderly, peering at me curiously. "Orta be more, be rights."

"'Ere, you," he said, addressing Porter, "there's another tent for you," and he bolted from my side into the fog, thrusting the batman through the flaps as he went. I was warm and drowsy, and soon fell into blissful slumber. It was still dark when I awoke. I was bitterly cold, the pyjamas clammy upon my skin, the sheets wet. I had perspired freely. The fever had left me: I was feeling better already; but I was devilish cold and this dampness was surely more than perspiration. I searched among the bedclothes. I was soaked to the skin. Then I made a discovery—the hot-water bottle had burst. I became furious

with rage, sitting huddled in my blankets. I shouted alternately for my batman and the orderly. I threw off the soggy night clothing and reclad myself in shirt and underclothes. The flap of the tent opened. Porter's tousled head appeared. "Go and get an orderly," I shouted. "I can't stay in this mess."

After a few minutes Porter returned with a sleepy-eyed soldier, who entered the tent. He looked at me, then at the diagnosis chart on the tent pole. "C.S.M.," he murmured in an undertone. "We ought t' put this mon in No. 3 Ward. We've got spare beds in there too," he said to the batman.

"Who the hell are you discussing?" I screamed, now thoroughly aroused.

"Beg pardon, sir," exclaimed the orderly meekly, "but it'll be all the same in a day or two what we call ye." I sprang out of bed and put on my overcoat. "Where's this bed? I'm not going to sit shivering in this tent any longer."

I put my socks and boots over my feet and, led by the orderly, crossed the field to a small marquee isolated by a hundred yards or more from the rest of the camp. We entered. The orderly looked over his shoulder at Porter. "Mustn't come in here. Strick orders against it. Tak' his claes awa." Porter retired protesting to his tent, and I crawled into a fresh bed, which an orderly made pleasantly warm with bottles, and I was soon asleep.

I awoke early upon a fine frosty morning and stretched my limbs. The fever had left me. I was hungry and felt a new buoyancy. I looked around me. Screens had been placed round two beds at the far end of the ward. There were three other beds besides my own—empty. No soul came from behind the screens. About eight o'clock a sergeant cautiously opened the tent flaps and looked in. I hailed him cheerfully.

"'Ullo, whatch you doin' 'ere?" inquired the Sergeant. I, my spirits revived, was in a flippant mood. "A burst hot-water bottle sent me in here, Sergeant. You can read the death sentence on the chart hanging up there," I explained, extending my hand over my head to the board which the orderly had brought from the first rendezvous. The Sergeant entered the marquee and examined the chart.

"Cerebro-spino meningitis," he exclaimed in hushed tones, whistling unpleasantly through his teeth.

"What's that?" I said, sitting straight up in bed. "Cerebro-spino meningitis," repeated the Sergeant, "but we calls it spotted

fever." Then he whispered confidentially, pointing to the screens, "Two blokes over there died of it last night."

The Sergeant backed towards the tent flaps saying, "The M.O. will see you about ten o'clock, sir," and then he disappeared.

I was alone with two dead bodies. I reflected. Of course, I hadn't noticed before, the tent reeked of sulphur fumes; they had been disinfecting the place. "Spotted fever—it'll be all the same in a day or two what we calls yer." This damned paper hanging over my head was a death sentence—blast the Yankee doctor for a bungling idiot—I was as fit as a flea now. The fever had passed away. I sat up on the side of the bed. Where were my clothes? Porter had them. Where was Porter? I jumped up, and, crossing swiftly to the tent opening, looked out. Across the field, bounded by whitewashed posts and wire, was a maze of tents. Somewhere among them was Porter with my clothes. I slipped into my socks and boots, and drew on my overcoat, and stole among the tents like a thief contemplating burglary. I met an orderly. I whistled, nonchalantly, pretending to be a convalescent taking the morning air. The orderly looked at me suspiciously, then perceiving the crown on my epaulets, reconsidered that this must be a privileged patient, and hurriedly saluted. I examined the tents; but could not determine in which, upon the previous night, I had been dumped. I cautiously opened the air flap of a tent. A voice from inside exclaimed with annoyance, "Have you got my shaving water yet?"—obviously the tent of the Medical Officer. I turned towards another one, and tapping gently on their sides one by one whispered the name of my batman, "Porter." At the fifth, a sleepy murmur from the blankets indicated that I had run my quarry to earth. The batman was indulging in all the luxury of clean sheets, white woollen blankets, hot-water bottles, a stove, and sleep undisturbed by alarms, excursions, rats, or rain-water. He pushed his head from the covering as I slipped through the doorway, and suddenly recognizing the intruder, sat up quickly. "Struth, Major," he said, "the orderly said you was goin' to die."

"I don't care a damn what the orderly said," I said in a low, threatening voice. "Hop out of that quick and get dressed. Where are my clothes? We're going back to the line—*ek dum*. Do you understand?" Porter knew the rare anger in my voice and leapt from the bed in a whirl of shirt tail. Quickly we threw on our clothes, and stowed away our packs. Then we

left the tent and walked briskly through the line of tents towards the flagstaff upon which fluttered the Red Cross flag, indicating the gateway. Three motor ambulances stood in the carriage-way. I went up to the first and addressed the driver with authority. "You are to drive me to my brigade headquarters at Clery," I said sharply, seating myself beside the driver.

"I'm not allowed to go beyond the C.C.S.," argued the driver.

"Don't you understand an order?" I threatened. "Drive me to Clery."

"I don't know the way," whined the driver.

"I'll show you," I said grimly.

Porter had meanwhile gathered an armful of blankets from within the ambulance and had packed them around my legs and feet, then he stowed himself into the ambulance. The driver, snorting with vexation, threw the motor into gear, and drove away. "Spotted fever," I laughed to myself, as I lit the first cigarette to which I had felt inclined for a week. The keen sting of the frosty morning air braced me; the sunbeams, after days of thaw and drizzle, warmed my skin and made my heart merry. The Casualty Clearing Station appeared upon the horizon of the long straight road. The driver slackened speed. "Go on," I said between my teeth, glancing menacingly towards the driver. Onwards the motor sped past ammunition dumps; through the ranks of heavy artillery which boomed fitfully; beside field-guns which, firing a salvo, made the driver leap in his seat to the unaccustomed sound and swerve dangerously; and finally to where the cobbled road amid the debris came to an abrupt end, giving way to a communication trench. I jumped down, extracting a ten-franc note from my wallet, which I handed to the driver. "Thank you," I said. "If there's any trouble, refer them to me, Major Hutchison, Machine-Gun Corps, and tell them I prefer to die here. Good-bye. Don't hang about this spot too long. It's unhealthy, and I shan't have time to attend your funeral."

I shouldered my pack and, followed by the faithful Porter, stepped briskly along the long frozen alley-way. Two hundred yards up I reached the timbered stairway leading down to the dugouts of the Brigade Headquarters. I ran lightly down the stairs and entered the brigade office. The General was seated at a table, immersed in the messages and maps upon his table.

"Good morning, General," I said gaily. The Brigadier started slightly, but did not raise his head immediately. Then,

pushing the gold-braided peak of his cap over his eyes, a camouflage which he used to hide their merry twinkle at times when the Adjutant-General's department demanded unwonted severity, his hand sought a pink telegram, which he handed to me. "I've just received a telegram about you. Read that," he said abruptly, and turning to the telephone said, "Tell the M.O. to report to me at once."

I studied the form in my hand—"Escaped from No. 5 C.C.S.—stop—Major Hutchison—stop—diagnosed spotted fever—stop—perhaps now insane—stop—apprehend and return forthwith unless deceased—stop—if dead bury and disinfect—AAA."

The walls and passages of the dugout echoed with uproarious laughter. I hugged my sides with glee. "Insane—deceased," I gurgled. A smile flickered in the Brigadier's eyes. Then he spoke with concealed severity. "Stand back by that door, young man." As I stepped back I collided with the Staff Captain, who had been drawn towards the unusual sounds of merriment. "Hullo! sir," exclaimed the innocent in astonishment.

"Don't touch him," roared the Brigadier. "He's insane, or—" he gulped his laughter, "—deceased. Now then, Major Hutchison," he said with mock severity, as he thrust his cap on the back of his head, "it is clear I have the choice of one of two courses. You can be certified insane, or be disinfected, but only after burial. Tell me, who diagnosed your case?"

"A blasted expert in midwifery, sir, and some confounded orderly in hospital at three o'clock this morning."

"Is that all?" inquired the Brigadier. I nodded my head in assent. "I think," continued the Brigadier, "I am the best judge as to your sanity. You have often given me grave cause to doubt it," his eyes twinkled, "but the present case for the moment establishes it without doubt. That disposes of the first course open to me. As to the second——" At this moment the Medical Officer appeared. I glowered at him. The Brigadier addressed the nervous little man, "Well, Doctor, what's the matter with Major Hutchison?"

"I've been figuring that myself, General," he replied. "To be specific, I should have diagnosed chill and urticaria."

"What's that!" I exclaimed. "I heard some of your medical jargon this morning—two blokes died of it last night."

"I should say, nettle rash," interjected the Medical Officer. "No son of a gun ever died of that."

"Captain Cook," said the Brigadier, "I am recommending

you for duty at the fever hospital. I understand that it suffers from lack of experts. You have very successfully cured this patient in fifteen hours." Then looking again at me he smiled, "I will dispense with the formality of burial, Hutchison, but I shall be obliged to disinfect you." He reached for a bottle of whisky and two glasses. "The finest cure for fever in the world is in that bottle—and it's the best disinfectant I know."

And that terminated my first visit to hospital.

CHAPTER XIII

MULE RACES

Nearly burnt alive—The battle of Arras—The story of "Dunny"—
Character of the Mule—Attacking the Hindenburg Line—A race
meeting behind the lines.

WE occupied the line opposite Mount St. Quentin, with time for visits to Paris and often to Amiens, up till the month of March 1917; and nothing very exciting happened except for a raid or two.

On one occasion, however, it was mere luck that I was not burnt alive. I had discovered on the side of a hill a very deep dugout, spacious in its interior and deliciously warm, but in compensation for such comfort it was honeycombed with lice. But these loathsome insects were very friendly compared with the bitter cold of the outside world. Surrounding the entrance to the dugout had been built a small timbered office, which I used as my command post, and in which the French had left behind an admirable oil stove. I occupied the dugout, 20 feet below ground, with my runners and with the reserve section. One night when we were all tucked up comfortably in our blankets, warm and snug, a shell, skimming the countryside and looking for a billet, came into collision with my office. The stove was overturned and set the timber on fire. We slept much too soundly to be disturbed by such common occurrences as shell-bursts in our vicinity, and it was not until I awoke half choked with smoke that I realized that not only was the place on fire but that we were trapped. I do not remember exactly what took place, for it was all done very quickly. But within a few seconds I had ordered my young people to wrap themselves tightly in blankets and to follow me as fast as possible up the timbered stairway, through the fire and out to fresh air.

I realize only a blaze of heat, through which I threw myself, and having my flaming blankets and clothing torn from me by men of the Worcestershires, and that I emerged minus eyebrows

and most of my hair. All the men got out more or less undamaged, and in the morning I found the skeletons of my field-glasses, revolver, and the charred remains of equipment, while the interior of the dugout continued to pop for hours as one by one the ammunition boxes exploded.

I was trapped in another fire in the Ramparts near the Menin Gate at Ypres early in 1918. On this occasion, though I escaped through the vigilance of my good batman, Porter, a number of officers and men were trapped in the dugouts and burnt alive.

In March the Division was moved from Corbie to Arras to take part in the battle of that name, with its assault upon the Hindenburg Line, our objective being Fontaine-lez-Croisilles at the head of the Sensée Valley. I shall not record the details of that battle, on the whole unsuccessful and in which we sustained very heavy casualties. Both the Scottish battalions in the Division, together with the 16th King's Royal Rifles (the Church Lads Brigade Battalion), in face of tremendous odds, acquitted themselves with magnificent heroism. It was beside Croisilles on the lip of a chalk quarry in the height of action that I first met Lieutenant George Harrison and commended him for his gallantry. It was "Harry" who became my Adjutant. He was for nearly two years my *alter ego*, my closest friend and confidant, whom I twice recommended for gallantry in the field, who was twice awarded the Military Cross, and with whom I afterwards became associated for three years in the direction of the London Press Exchange and its associated companies.

But the tale of my own part in the battle of Arras is perhaps best told in the story of one of my mules, Dunny, a veteran.

Old Bill Harris, ex-trooper of Dragoons, reservist, veteran of South Africa, and re-enlisted in the Machine-Gun Corps, one of the 100th Machine-Gun Company, curry-comb in hand, leant his back against the wheel of the limber, and addressed himself to the Transport Sergeant.

"It's like this 'ere, Sergeant," he said. "The Major's second 'orse aint what I'd call a riding 'orse, but 'es too good for limber work. Look at 'im; a smart bit of 'orseflesh but too 'eavy, I says, for a riding 'orse. 'E ought ter be in the mess cart, and make it a bloody smart turn-out. Why, it's just a bloody joke with that lop-eared mule."

"Well, wotcher goin' to do with th' mule, 'Arris?" replied the Sergeant. "'E ain't no good for nuffink . . . slow as a snail . . . ugly as 'ell, but . . ."

"I've got yer but, all right, Sergeant. Yer won't part with 'im. Nor will I. 'E's a bloody mascot 'e is. Four wound stripes and three blues. Mind when Jerry shelled the lines at 'Amlin-court . . . they filled 'is skin with shrapnel. Look at 'em warts on 'is 'ide . . . vet said them was ticks, and wanted to 'vacuate 'im till the Toc O showed 'im they was shrapnel-balls. 'E's a mascot, 'e is, and Bill 'Arris ain't goin't give 'im the go-by, even if 'e does 'ave to sit be'ind 'is bloody caurcase for the 'durashun.' But what I says is, make 'im into a spare hanimal, I says, and let me 'av the Major's second 'orse for the mess cart, and get the vet when 'e comes along to sling out that bitch, Judy, as an in-trackable hanimal . . . the bit wot slogged Andy Merson in the belly with 'er 'eels, and sent 'im to Blighty with appenacitis."

"All right, 'Arris, I'll tell Mister 'Eath, and will try and work it."

Bill Harris hitched his breeches a little higher, and clasped his leather belt cameoed with regimental badges, then administered an affectionate slap with the body-brush upon the sleek shining withers of my second horse, and passed warily down the mule lines. The horses and mules were picketed to stumps of trees, and to the wheels of limbers, upon the dry slopes of a shell-pitted field on the friendly side of what in earlier days had been the rural village of Croisilles, now a shambles of masonry, uprooted trees, cemetery stones, and devastated gardens. There was no cover other than the receding slope which prevented direct observation, though the enemy's balloons would peep up at odd moments with the object of discovering where the next concentration was taking place, destined to throw itself against the defences of the Hindenburg Line. The ground was searched from time to time with high explosive, but the lines now for two days, following an erstwhile hedge, had escaped annoyance. The mules, bored with inactivity, with bellies full, alternately savaged each other, or let fly at any passing drivers with fore or hind foot, head or tail, off or near side, with that quaint anatomical ease conferred upon nature's useful digression.

Harris made a detour round the heels and came to the end of the line at which, untethered, stood a huge, ungainly animal, pale fawn in colour, of uncertain age, who smiled upon him as he came forward. That may be difficult to believe, but no one disputes the fact that a dog will grin, and the smile of a mule, to say nothing of its high-pitched ribald laughter, is a very

wonderful thing. Mules seldom smile, but laugh often : that is a subtle distinction. When a mule laughs men run for their lives ; but when Dunny smiled, men came to the beast without fear and with affection.

Bill Harris stroked the veteran's nose. "Yer goin' to reserve," he said, "ay, bran mash and easy taimes . . . be one of the blinking staff. I'll 'ang red tabs on yer withers, an' make the rest salute yer. . . . Judy's fer the 'igh jump ; but we'll keep yer, Dunny, with the band, ter make the lads laugh, when we're in reserve."

With very rare exceptions, journalists are not kind to the mule. No poet has sung its praises. And, without doubt, the mule has been the victim of more abuse, blasphemous curses, obscene oaths and brutality than the rest of the world's quadrupeds put together. Beasts of burden in every truth : "stubborn as a mule" is a sarcasm ; but we have also heard "sure-footed as a mule." And there were thousands, whose speech was uncouth, whose reading was poor, and whose writing was worse, who knew, deep down in their hearts, but could not express it—"great-hearted as a mule."

The drivers of artillery ammunition columns, of infantry pack animals, and of machine-gun limbers knew. And wherever an empire called its sons in the Great War—among the shell-holes of Flanders' battlefields, in the dust and stench of Mesopotamia, amid the screaming missiles and rugged bypaths of Gallipoli—wherever was a son of Britain, there was a mule.

There are, too, a thousand others who would sing its praise—muleteers in the rocky fastnesses of the Andes, tonga wallahs in the Indian foothills, peasants in Andalusia—the hymn of praise in unprintable blasphemy goes ever up to Heaven. But that surely is right, for man is born in sin, of the Devil, and in order to provide a beast of impossible earthly burdens he has interfered with the God of Nature, producing a four-footed animal, half God, half Devil. So the poetry of man's praise must logically blaspheme the Almighty.

So it is ; and thus the mule.

Feed him upon oats and give him a bed of straw, and he will neither understand nor appreciate it. If you treat him as a joke, he must reply ; and, be it remembered, that a mule's humour is expressed with the ends of his feet. But give him work, and in danger and in difficulty the mule will be found . . . great-hearted.

Dunny had completed two years in the line. These were years which had entailed long night drives across wasted fields and dangerous roads, in bitter wind and driving rain, with no other light to brighten the journey into the unknown than that of the fog-veiled star-shell or the quick-cut flash of bursting cordite : years of endless toil, with short, so-called rests, when he was picketed in a long line among his kicking friends, up to the hocks in freezing mud, or facing a dust-storm. What a life ! His hide bore traces of shrapnel and his knees were swollen with stumbling beyond his fault. But Dunny never grumbled. He just smiled. Every driver knew his smile, and as he passed carefully down the mule lines, when he came to Dunny he twisted his tail affectionately, while Bill Harris wasted his time in plaiting the hairy tuft of its end with gaily coloured ribbons. The whole Brigade knew Dunny, and loved him for his smile. He was indeed our mascot. At times of rest from battle, we made fun of him and dressed him up in trousers, pulled him along backwards by his leathery tail, perched an old hat on his head and led him out as the clown of a horse show, or to be mocked by peasant children in the towns behind the battle-line. And Dunny just smiled.

Our Division had been ordered to attack the Hindenburg Line. The 98th and 100th Brigades had been selected for the assaults respectively north and south of the valley. The details do not matter.

The southern brigade, creeping at dawn from the valley over the steep chalk hillside, in one rush had captured the front and support lines after short and bitter fighting—bayonet, bludgeon, and bomb—and was now blocking the communication trenches and reversing the parapet to meet the expected counter-attack. The northern brigade, on the left, co-operating with another division, participating in the general assault, had gained its objective, but an immediate counter-attack by the enemy had ejected the men of that division, leaving the brigade with its left wing in the air, while German machine-guns from the concrete posts in the recaptured trench raked the falling ground to its rear, preventing the passage to the line of any further troops to support or relief. The two brigades had failed also to establish connection with each other across the dry river-bed of the Sensée River which became the focus for the artillery point of both sides. The ruins of the village of Fontaine, and the willow copse, which had shaded the stream and stored explosives, burst

into flames and the thick smoke of cordite mingled with brickdust rose to the skies. One battalion of the northern brigade having suffered heavy casualties, remained established in this part of the captured line, held upon one flank by an enemy increasing his strength every moment, and upon the other by a fierce furnace, opposed in the front by masses of armed men and completely cut off in the rear by machine-gun fire. The air was filled with stick-bombs and slowly, inch by inch, yard by yard, the enemy was forcing his way from the north, penetrating the captured line. Every minute the ammunition of the attacking force grew less and less. It could only be a question of time before the remnant of the battalion was annihilated.

Bill Harris, with the reserve mules and my horse, was waiting in an old chalk quarry, waiting for victory to go on. From the high ground by Croisilles he had looked over the landscape beyond the Hindenburg Line and could see the open fields, and far in the distance the untouched villages and church spires. He was waiting for the break-through, for the feel of a horse between his legs as in the days of the South African campaigning. For two years he had waited . . . shells screamed spitefully over the quarry, the wounded began to pass by its mouth.

The Transport Sergeant, wet with sweat, appeared. "'Arris, 'and over them two mules. There's 'ell up in the valley. Gawd ! I've never seen such a mess. . . . 'Alf the Transport gone west . . . the boys in the line shouting for bombs an' we can't get 'em up . . . machine-gunnin' like 'ell. . . . Chuck us the reins."

He swung his leg across one of the mules and galloped up the valley. Harris peered out. Columns of smoke and dust were blowing down between the low hills. He lost sight of the Sergeant for a while, then saw him again with other drivers feverishly cutting the traces from two animals on the ground, and hitching the two fresh mules to the limber. Smoke again obliterated the scene. When it had cleared the limber was well up the shallow gorge, then the driver wobbled in his saddle and, pitching forward, fell to the ground. The terrified mules plunged forward, then, tearing themselves free, fled down the valley of death.

"Gawd !" Harris whistled. "This is a pretty how-d'ye-do. Dunny, old son, it's you and me for it, now or never." He whispered into her ear. "Dunny, darling, can you get a move on for once in your bloody life? We've gotta be quick, you and me."

There was no hesitation. Harris jerked the reins, and up that valley, facing the storm of bombardment, trotted Dunny beside the veteran. A huge shell burst beside them throwing mountains of turf and debris into the air; the continual swish of missiles sang above their heads. Wounded men, unattended and screaming with pain, crouched in chalk excavations on the hillside; the earth rocked with detonations, the atmosphere was poisonous with gas and blinding with dust.

"Good ole Dunny," roared the signallers as the mule ambled by. "Good ole Dunny." He deflected an ear and smiled, then passed on into the smoke.

Harris, groping in the dust which afforded momentary cover, discovered the limber. The Transport Sergeant was dead beside it.

Quickly Harris fixed the trace-ends to the swingle-tree, then planting himself upon the limber he shook the reins, and Dunny ploughed forward through the turmoil. Then suddenly the smoke lifted. At the same moment the pole and traces snapped, cut clean by a stream of machine-gun bullets. Dunny stopped. Bill Harris was hideously wounded. Blood oozed through the breast of his tunic, and it coursed down the sides of his mouth. With that half-conscious action, born of discipline, and fired by the matchless quality of British courage, his hands sought and fumbled the missing trace-ends. He found no traces, but his fingers found something equally familiar—the hairy tufted end of Dunny's tail, still tied in the motley of its coloured ribbons.

"Dunny, darlin'," he hiccupped through the blood, "don' forget ole Bill 'Arris. . . . 'E's goin' west . . . you've gotta go on by yersel'."

With the rein-end he lashed the mule's tail to the swingle-tree, firmly, securely, finally. A cloud of smoke again enveloped them. Harris heard an urgent call, a cheer from the beleaguered trench. Dunny looked round at the driver, and smiled. Harris gulped, then spat the blood from his mouth. "I'm not goin' to leave yer after all, Dunny." He dragged himself back up on to the limber, then spluttered, "Gee . . . p. I'm coming with yer" . . . then with a muffled laugh, Bill Harris collapsed upon his throne of bombs, and toppled off the limber.

The old mule, with neck and withers riddled with shot, his tail lashed to a load of bombs, stood for a moment irresolute on the battlefield—blinded by smoke and dust, stunned with the

endless rattle of musketry and machine-guns, mighty explosions, the scream of shells, wounds.

But Dunny had heard the urge to go forward, he did not linger. As the old mule felt the weight of the limber dragging on his body, he thrust his stubby feet into the turf and threw his weight into the task. Stubborn as a mule . . . ye gods! He came near to the harassed trench. Men now husbanding their ammunition and resources called frantically from their insecurity. The breach between the two brigades had almost been filled. Small groups of men, after hours of bitter hand-to-hand fighting, had been able to work up the valley and establish themselves amid the masonry of Fontaine. The 100th Brigade had slowly but continuously bombed its way down towards the river-bed, and although no communication had been established, a continuous line of strong points, thinly held, had been established. But the German troops were pressing hard upon the left flank of the 98th Brigade. From the concealment of deep communication trenches, too close to enable artillery support, and far too intermixed with those being grimly held by British soldiers to permit of machine-gun co-operation, an endless hail of bombs descended upon the defenders. The dead and wounded piled high in the narrow trenches. A desperate sortie across the open ground had been made by an officer with a handful of men, but it had perished almost as soon as it had risen above the parapots.

Without a further supply of ammunition, the little garrison could not hold on much longer. Dunny plodded on, dragging his burden. A shell burst above him, a bullet ripped his flank, but Dunny continued to draw his crazy load across the shell-torn field.

Fifty yards . . . forty yards . . . a machine-gun tore out his lungs . . . thirty yards . . . he was ploughing through the barbed wire which tore his hocks to the bone . . . twenty yards. . . . "Old soldiers never die, they only fade away." . . . Dunny was fading . . . ten yards . . . a cheer broke from the dry throats of four hundred men, answered by another from the high ground to the south. A field-gun had been brought into action from the chalk quarry and was silencing the enemy's murderous fire which had for so long cut off reinforcements. Five yards . . . Dunny toppled into the trench, the limber overturned, and into the trench were tipped a thousand bombs.

Dunny was fading. Fifty sweating men, dust-covered and scarred, in their shirt-sleeves, were fighting for life itself around

its body ; and as a grey film stole over Dunny's sad smiling eyes one of a thousand friends with his one unwounded hand stroked the soft, hot nose. Dunny was fading away. . . . Dunny was gone to join the Transport Sergeant, who lay, for ever at peace, in the Hindenburg Line.

The fight went on. The air was filled with bombs. A storming party stole out from a flank and entered the enemy's trench—bayonet, bludgeon, and bomb. Reinforcements from the 19th Brigade were coming up the valley, their deep-throated cheers bringing fresh courage to the isolated men. They followed the way up which Dunny had led. The day was saved . . . a message went back along the valley to the Divisional Commander . . . reinforcements were up . . . the gaps were filled . . . and when night fell, the line was held. That message was carried by my groom, Bill Clegg : and he won a Military Medal for his success. But there is no medal for a mule, but those of us who think of the past keep always two things green, our memory and our grass, for the mule—stubborn, sure-footed, great-hearted !

I lost some very good officers and men in this bitter hand-to-hand fighting, in which the enemy on one occasion collected our dead, heaped them into a big pile and lighted an enormous human bonfire ; while we, with some two hundred prisoners, herded in a chalk quarry, when we found the position untenable in a local counter-attack and fearful of losing our prisoners, hurled handfuls of Mills bombs among them so that at least they would become casualties. Such is war, " an eye for an eye."

On the 27th May my company was inspected by Brigadier-General A. W. F. Baird. I knew that on the Somme I had won his respect, and since. But it was not until after Arras, still feeling myself under the cloud of military disapproval since 1915, that I realized that I had won also his affection, and he made a speech to us of which I had a shorthand note taken at the time. I glowed with pride ; and afterwards he took me affectionately by the arm and I rode beside him to his headquarters for lunch.

He said : " Major Hutchison, Officer, N.C.O.s, and men of the 100th Machine-Gun Company. It is a great pleasure for me to come here to-day to express my thanks and appreciation of the part you played during the recent operations. When the Company came to my brigade I told you that you had come to a brigade where smartness and soldierly bearing, both in the line and in billets, were highly valued. As a regular soldier,

I place a high value on smartness of turn-out, and I am glad to say that whenever a ceremonial parade of any kind has been ordered this Unit has been second to none in my brigade. As regards the recent operations, I have had no opportunity before of expressing my appreciation of the work performed by this Company on April 23rd. It seems unquestionable that the value of sustained machine-gun fire directed against the enemy rear communications and support lines inflicted heavy casualties upon him. Again, in the operations of May 20th, I know that the labour entailed in the collection of the necessary stores and ammunition was considerable, but you have the satisfaction of knowing that the machine-gun fire aided materially in breaking up and checking enemy counter-attacks, and the effect of your machine-gun barrage was either to break up these attacks or to weaken them, so that they could be easily repulsed by the men in the trenches. I attach the highest importance to machine-gun fire and whenever operations have been contemplated, your Commanding Officer has never failed to draw up a full and comprehensive scheme for his machine-guns.

"Lastly, and this I am sure you will value more than anything I have said, by your good work at all times you have won the respect and confidence of the rest of the Brigade.

"Once again I thank you for the work performed during the recent operations."

In June we were withdrawn from the line and went back again to Picquigny where I was billeted with the village school-master, a most charming and erudite gentleman. The Divisional Commander, General Pinney, in order to provide a diversion, proposed a race meeting and horse show, and selected an admirable course at Cavillon. We worked like niggers on our horses and transport, and my limber turn-out won first prizes in each class in which they were shown.

I wrote a flippant report on this meeting for the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* at the time ; and I think it amusing to reproduce this here :

"The 1917 Flat Racing Season in the B.E.F. was opened by a Divisional Spring Meeting, last month. The course, situated on a rolling down in a recent 'No Man's Land,' stretching between three piles of debris and brickdust—lately Epsom, Banstead, and Tadworth !—sprang up in a night. It is a short

one of five furlongs and practically straight. Fine weather gave a very enjoyable meeting, and the turf was in splendid condition.

"The arrangements made by the Stewards were amazing. The Enclosure and Grand Stand, 'For County Gentlemen and Officers Only,' with the added legend, 'Beware of Pickpockets'; Tattersalls' Ring; Paddock and Weighing-in Rooms; Clerk of the Scales; Judge's Box; the white-railed course—nothing had been forgotten. 'Charlie's Bar' was transferred by special request from Newmarket, with a welcome alteration in prices, which were calculated not to injure the pockets of even heavy drinkers. Had more of the racegoers been aware of this fact



earlier, the strain on the barmen might have been severe. A tea-room on the same lines was also in evidence and proved almost as popular as its neighbour. The Divisional Staff was most generously 'At Home.' Tattersalls' Enclosure on the other side of the course also provided tea for the asking, provided that the request was accompanied by a mess tin. A crowd representing many English County Regiments, Highland, Lowland, Rifles, and every arm of the Service, besieged the marquee with a babel of noise the whole day.

"The tracks leading to the course were a scene of busy movement early in the afternoon.

"The runners, not forgetting a large number of mules, totalled several hundred, and these with the crowd who travelled by wagon, by bicycle, by motor, or on foot, resembled big columns,

those of some other Divisions, on the march. We had not looked for the 'Coach Club' on the battlefield. But Brig.-General Baird with that initiative which has made him so distinguished both on the battlefield and in the sporting world turned out two light draught horses with his own two chargers as leads, in a four-in-hand, which coach, carrying his own Headquarters as 'party,' bore a suspicious resemblance to the wagon which brings our rations. A long whip and equally long cigar completed a picture of the late Mr. Vanderbilt at Richmond. The roads leading to the course did not perhaps present such a kaleidoscopic appearance as those to Epsom Downs on Derby Day, due to the lack of variety of the vehicles officially issued to the Army; but the banter, pleasant or otherwise, between the racegoers, was



if anything, even more pronounced. That there is latent eloquence of a high order in every Army driver was demonstrated wherever there was a collision.

"The familiar figures with little black bags and large blackboards were absent, doubtless making munitions elsewhere. Nevertheless, Tattersalls' Silver Ring was the scene of considerable financial activity among those who had been paid out the same morning, whilst a surreptitious traffic, carried on by orderlies and batmen from the Officers' Enclosure, filed across the course to 'Black and White,' 'Old Joe,' and the fraternity, before every race. The odds, uncontrolled by any of the aforesaid little gentlemen in broad bowlers, changed with alarming rapidity. The solitary tipster who ventured into the enclosure was unceremoniously dealt with by the only member of the police force in evidence during the day, who showed characteristic promptness on his reappearance in Tattersalls.

"In the paddock could be seen little knots of owners criticizing the horseflesh paraded there, some of them, moreover, very temporary owners, who imagine that every animal lent them by a benevolent Government can go 'some'—and they can! To stand and listen to the names of the runners being bellowed by relays of heated and thirsty Stewards—hence the relays—was more than amusing. Three mules of vicious tendency—'Faith, Hope, and Charity,' the most vicious, the greatest of these, 'Love,' of the Worcestershire Regiment. The Highland Regiments, Argylls, and H.L.I. produced such classics as 'Flying Fox,' 'White Heather,' 'Persimmon,' and 'Lemberg,' amongst animals as nobby and tufted as only the after effects of a winter campaign can make light draught horses. The Middlesex, Queen's, and Royal Fusiliers were local and homely, as behoves Cockney humour, 'Napoo,' 'Umteen,' 'Farrier's Friend,' the unshoeable; 'U-Boat,' and the Bing Boys, 'George' and 'Alfred.' The Staff, enjoying the privilege of frequent leave in London and Paris, favoured the stage, thus 'Gaby,' 'Delysia,' 'Zena,' and 'Phyllis.'

"Colour was lent to the scene by members of the chorus of 'The Shrapnels Revue Company,' who are touring the district. Miss Sadie Sthaies, Miss Clarice Corcette, and Miss Hida Nytie appeared in ravishing toilettes. Two mules were observed to bolt on their approach—presumably to bring their friends. The ladies, to the chagrin of the A.S.C. Sergeant-Majors and other magnates, were escorted by their friends of the Company.

"The first race on the programme was the Adinfer Stakes for N.C.O.s and men, for which there were no fewer than eighty entries, representing all arms of the Service, with the exception of the 'Tanks,' though an element of the parade gave one an impression that they had entered. This proved one of the most popular events, won by Private Reece's 'Billy' by a neck from the Queen's 'Black Bess.' At the moment the race was ended a diversion was caused by a coster and his wife driving their cart at a gallop the whole length of the course. The man then handed the strings to his wife, leapt out, and with lightning rapidity fooled numerous county gentlemen of the Enclosure with the three-card trick. He disappeared with his spoils as rapidly as he had come.

"Meanwhile the runners for the 3.30 p.m. race, the Ayette Maiden Plate, for Officer riders, catchweights, were parading. It was won in the last half-furlong by Lieutenant Kennard's

(A.D.C.) 'Netta,' owner up, from Lieutenant Edward's (Worcestershire Regiment) 'Frugal,' Captain Paul up, after a race which he kept well in hand. The field numbered forty-two.

"The 'Domino Stakes,' flat race, open to horses belonging to and ridden by members of the Military Mounted Police, followed. It was won by Sergeant Fletcher's 'Paddy,' from the A.P.M.'s 'Black Jester.'

"The 'Boiry Maiden Plate,' for Infantry Officers' chargers, catchweights, a very keenly contested race, was won by the Worcestershire Regiment's 'Cuthbert,' from H.L.I.'s 'Ruby,' Major Stoney on the former riding a great race from Captain Paul on the latter. Field of thirty-seven.

"The 'St. Ledger Stakes,' named not after the famous classic race, but after a captured village in the vicinity, was the event



of the day. Open flat race, 12 st., previous winners 14 lb. extra. The R.W.F.'s 'Girlie,' ridden by Lieutenant Yates at 13 st. 13 lb., won from A.S.C.'s 'Francois,' Captain Jackson up, with Captain Gordon's (A.V.C.) 'Jack Straw' third. It is interesting to recall that 'Girlie' was captured from the enemy on the retreat from Mons, and has served with this Battalion throughout the campaign, as has her jockey. She started a hot and popular favourite, being well known for her speed throughout the B.E.F.

"The final race at 5.30 p.m., the 'Prix d'Alphonso,' Open Flat Race for Mules, was run in two spasms, owing to the enormous number of entries. It was ridden bareback, and proved most quixotic. The parade to the starting-point before the race was almost as interesting as the race itself. Several of the mules, as a protest against delayed feeds, left their riders at the starting-point to complete the course on foot. Some remarkable feats of horsemanship, all over the mule, were performed by many

riders. In the middle of the first spasm two mules made for home in front of the whole field, scattering the crowd right and left, whilst the coster's wife, still voteless, in spite of Mr. Asquith's recently expressed adherence to her cause, flung her masculine proportions across the course. To those who witnessed this and the episode at Tattenham Corner, the former was the more heroic.

"Throughout the afternoon, owing to the proximity of the battle, a squadron of the Royal Flying Corps patrolled overhead, and effectively kept at a distance the scouts of the enemy. This



arduous duty did not prevent some of the pilots exhibiting their skill by looping the loop amid the plaudits of the crowd beneath. The only other guard considered necessary was mounted behind the Enclosure, conceivably behind Charlie's Bar !

"The Divisional Commander, who rode on to the course with his A.D.C.s early in the afternoon, was the conspicuous figure in the Judge's box, and carried out his duties with that good humour and joviality which has endeared him to all ranks of his Division. Of the jockeys Captain Paul, who rode in three races, finishing second in two, was outstanding.

"The brilliant success of the meeting was entirely due to Major-General R. J. Pinney, commanding the Division, who not only fostered the original idea, but personally supervised every

detail of the arrangements. These were most ably carried out by Lieut.-Colonel P. G. Lea, Captain B. L. Montgomery, and the indefatigable Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Major H. C. C. Batten, together with other Stewards.

"A silver trumpet presented by Captain B. L. Montgomery for the Unit gaining the highest number of points in the meeting was won by the 2nd Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment. It is a trophy which, as a souvenir alone, will always have an honoured place in the mess of that Battalion in years hereafter.

"The meeting was a triumphant success, and as such is ample proof of the wonderful morale and spirit of our troops lately engaged in very heavy fighting."

CHAPTER XIV

SUPREME ACHIEVEMENT

“For gallantry in the field”—Something unique in military history—
“Hunter Bunter”—Passchendaele—Meteren—Action front!—
Ding-dong battle—Backs to the wall—Gassed—Corps special orders
—War’s necessity—Panic.

FROM Arras we went for a period to Nieuport on the coast. During these summer months there was glorious sea-bathing, sometimes under shell-fire, from the sand-dunes at La Panne ; and during my sojourn there, while in a concrete dugout a nine-inch shell arrived on top of it, killing all of those with me, but fortunately only filling the skin on my scalp with little bits of cement. I was then appointed Divisional Machine-Gun Officer, one of the most absurd appointments ever invented within an army. For in the Army one gives or receives orders, one neither gives nor receives advice. The giver, at any rate, is likely to be told to mind his own business, and I suffered this not infrequently at the hands of one brigadier.

From Nieuport we came south to Ypres to take part in the battle of the Menin Road and I went home for five days’ leave. On my return I learnt that my senior sergeant, Peter Dean, who had won a D.C.M. at Loos and had served with me from 1914 with the 93rd, had been court-martialled for striking a corporal. In the circumstances most men would have done the same thing. He was savagely sentenced for this trivial offence to reduction to the ranks with the additional imposition of ninety-one days’ Field Punishment No. 1. He came with me into action on the Menin Road as an orderly and on the 24th and 25th September we were engaged in most heavy fighting around Northampton Farm and in Polygon Wood against the Wytschatee Group of the 4th German Army. The ground over which we fought was the most shell-pitted of any on the British front, scarcely a single tree remaining as an indication of a landmark. Nothing but miles and miles of mud, and holes filled with water.

I suffered very heavy casualties, and recommended one of my Company Commanders, Gelsthorpe, for the Victoria Cross. He not only completely broke up a heavy counter-attack by the 230th R.I.R., but being a parson himself, camouflaged as a captain, reported to me that he had "buried his dead each according to their own denominations."

Another Company Commander, Faulkner, whom I aided to a dressing station, had his field-glasses blown through his back, but survived. After Faulkner was wounded I placed Private Dean in charge of the Company, no man of better experience or more courageous a fighter. No more severe trial of machine-gunners, in my experience, was ever made than during this battle, with the immense difficulties involved in getting up enormous boxes of ammunition across such a terrain to the machine-gun posts.

I recommended Dean for a bar to his D.C.M. and for a direct Commission in the field. The promulgation of his court martial had not yet come through and before it was received, I was handed a telegram by an orderly from Divisional Headquarters informing me that "Private, acting Sergeant, Peter Dean is awarded a Direct Commission in the field for gallantry, is appointed to a Commission as 2nd Lieutenant in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and is to continue to serve with his own Unit." So I had on my hands a new officer, who at the same time as a private was awaiting promulgation of sentence to being tied to a cart-wheel to serve out a No. 1 punishment.

After we were withdrawn from action, I had my four Machine-Gun Companies formed up in hollow square, and rode on to parade to address them, carrying papers in my hands.

I called for Private Dean, who stepped from the ranks and stood before me in the middle of the square.

The Companies expected that I was about to read promulgation of sentence by court martial. I commenced to speak very gravely: "Officers and men of the Machine-Gun Companies of the 33rd Division, I have asked you on parade this morning in order to inform you of important information which I have received from Divisional Headquarters in respect of the person of Private Dean." I stopped, and leisurely unfolded my papers. Then I called to my senior sergeant, Kiddie, who had also served with me with the 93rd since 1914, and commanded him, "Do your duty, Sergeant Kiddie."

Private Dean was still wearing the three stripes of the rank of

acting sergeant ; and the troops expected that Sergeant Kiddie would strip these from his arms. The stage management was perfect ; and Kiddie removed the stripes from the arms of Peter Dean. There followed a pause.

Then again I addressed the troops ; and I read the telegram received from the War Office, adding that I had promoted 2nd Lieutenant Dean to the acting rank of Captain in command of a company, while Sergeant Kiddie pinned on each shoulder the three stars of the new appointment, and an immense cheer, ending the drama, broke from the throats of my companies on parade. A great curtain !

I believe it to be unique in the history of the British Army that any man undergoing sentence of court martial has been promoted in the field for gallantry, and unique also that he be raised from the rank of private to that of captain as a simultaneous appointment. That I was fully justified is proven by the fact that in addition to the Distinguished Conduct Medal with bar, itself almost a unique distinction, Dean afterwards was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry in the assault on the Hindenburg Line in September 1918, served after the War with distinction in the Mohmand Campaign, and is still serving in the Regular Army as a Captain in the Royal Tank Corps.

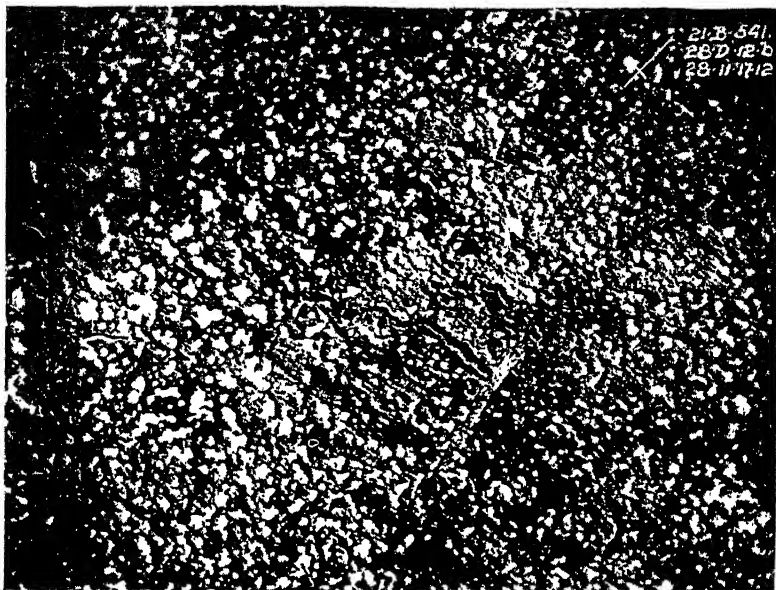
Up to the time of the disbandment of the Machine-Gun Corps, the clerical authorities who kept the records could not discover what had happened to Private Dean, reported not as a casualty and yet concerning whom there was no record of any stoppage of pay or of his carrying out his sentence. But Dean was armed with a cheque-book from Cox's Bank, and I plead guilty to destroying the whole of the records of his court martial which properly, after promulgation, I should have returned to the Base.

It was during this period that the Division was in the Corps commanded by Sir A. Hunter-Weston, popularly known as "Hunter-Bunter." Many good tales are told of his versatility and quixotism. How he stood on top of a pill-box under shell-fire and lectured to the universe—Staff Officers, fatigue men, Commanding Officers, batmen, subalterns, and drivers, with their pack animals, were all gathered into his audience by his stentorian voice. How he would test our box respirator drill efficiency by poking his head into dugouts and shouting " Gas ! " and watching through his monocle with intense amusement our struggles to be alert. His interest in our domestic arrangements,

cleanliness of the Brigadier's frying-pan, for which, if found correct, he always shook hands with the cook and congratulated him ; his war upon flies ; and his schemes of sanitation, and for the salvage of every known thing, with huge notice-boards erected to remind us of our duty in these respects in the front line : " Cleanliness comes next to Godliness " ; " What have you salved to-day ? " and " Remember you will have to pay for the war," to which someone facetiously remarked, " Save my skin and you can tax me up to the eyes." These were my own experience, but everyone knows the chestnuts about the corpse under the blanket, and the leave train at Vlamertinghe.

The policy of imagining that all a machine-gunner required both for defence and for protection against the weather was a glorified coote's nest, now fell into abeyance, and for the most part the machine-gun teams were well posted in pill-boxes. The best remembered and popular of these were probably Isis, Graf Farm, Heinc House, Thames, Tyne Cotts, Itchy, Joy, Dan House, Jutland. On many occasions, the front of the 33rd Division was raided by the Germans, particularly from the gasometers, and opposite the railway from the direction of the Passchendaele Station. Again and again the Machine-Gun Companies were thanked by the Brigadiers for their promptitude in bringing down the S O S Barrage, both direct and indirect. This was particularly so on the occasion of a raid upon the posts of the 1st Queen's, in which the enemy not only failed to reach the posts, but left at least fifteen dead lying out in front of the wire, in the machine-gun barrage line ; and during a similar raid upon the Cameronians opposite Passchendaele Church. Several successful raids, also, were carried out by our troops, which were admirably supported by direct and indirect machine-gun fire. There is no doubt whatever, that by this time the Infantry had the greatest confidence in direct machine-gun fire by night, and in the barrage ; and invariably it was asked for.

We remained at Passchendaele, the most dreaded of Sectors, both by British and by German troops, during the whole of the winter of 1917-18. On the 13th February an order was issued by the War Office approving the formation of Machine-Gun Battalions. This order was received by me when the Battalion was on the line of march from Westbecourt to Ypres, at St. Martin au Laert, where we had halted to billet for the night. Within two hours the change of organization was completed, reflecting the greatest credit especially on Lieutenant Harrison,



AEROPLANE PHOTOGRAPH OF THE FRONT POSTS
AT PASSCHENDAELE

The trench line and posts are distinctly seen amid a waste of waterlogged shell-holes. Against the shadow of the trench can be seen the gleaming pin-prick tops of steel helmets. Undoubtedly a Sector of the British line of most hideous reputation.



A SNAPSHOT, LOOKING ACROSS THE SAME GROUND AS THAT
DEPICTED ABOVE

The dark mound on the horizon is what remained of Passchendaele church in December 1917.

who after I had observed him at Croisilles, had become my acting Adjutant.

Apart from the organization prescribed for the Establishment, I formed a Scout Section of twenty-five selected, specially trained young soldiers, and a troop of twelve mounted orderlies, while I selected for my orderly-room staff the picked brains of the Battalion, among whom was J. H. Thompson, the head clerk of a well-known firm of solicitors, who not only fulfilled the duties of orderly-room sergeant, but was actually the "Pooh-ba" of the Division.

There is no doubt whatever that my own was the first Machine-Gun Battalion formed, for as it is noted, within two hours of the receipt of the order, the Battalion was on the march into action with every appointment filled, and its War Establishment complete: an admirable beginning to a battalion in which promptitude of action played a prominent part.

I had a reputation for sweating my officers and for never punishing a man. And I think I fairly lived up to it.

We remained in the line at Passchendaele, at which there was very little activity on the part of the enemy. But on the 29th March the storm broke on the front of the 5th Army. The Division was withdrawn from the line and we were moved by bus and train to Lattre St. Quentin. Very little news filtered through except that the enemy had made attacks upon a stupendous scale; and rolling up the 4th and 5th Armies had almost broken our line, and that of the French; and was advancing rapidly on the road to Paris.

We remained in our concentration area for two days; but at 7 p.m. on the 10th orders were received to proceed by tactical trains to the Caestre area. My battalion was hurried into wagons behind a snorting engine, divested of its transport, but with all our guns and ammunition boxes. Near St. Pol, a great shell hit the train, and killed forty of my men, cooped up in one cattle wagon.

We detrained at Meteren at 10 p.m. on the 11th April. At 10.30 on the morning of the 12th, seated in a placid farm-house, with my battalion bivouacked in a pasture among cows and poultry, I received orders to have a reconnaissance made. I took out three cyclist patrols from my Scouts and reconnoitred due south of Meteren and to Oostersteene. Here large numbers of both wounded and unwounded men were in full retreat. I observed especially the men of one Division, with their pouches

still filled with ammunition, who had not fired a shot, but were running away in the face of the enemy, completely disorganized.

We rode on upon our bicycles ; and half a mile further on came in sight of groups of the enemy pushing forward under covering fire, behind them flaming homesteads.

I rallied some of the Infantry and lined them out on a five hundred yards front as a screen so that the Casualty Clearing Station could be evacuated. After this I commandeered a Ford ambulance, instructing the driver to take me back to Meteren. No Ford ever went faster. I reported to General Pinney, suggesting that my guns should be rushed up to fill the breach and that the Infantry should follow as soon as possible.

In Meteren there was an A.S.C. motor lorry column. I requested the use of a lorry, but the officer refused it. I hit him on the head with the butt of my revolver, and instructed the driver, Sharples, a splendid young fellow who rendered yeoman assistance to the Division during the next few days, to drive off.

We halted at my farm-house and within a few minutes half a company of machine-gunners, guns and ammunition complete, had been packed into the lorry, while I myself, with Harrison, my Adjutant, sat beside Sharples at his wheel, revolvers in hand. We drove straight on over the Ridge on which stood the Hoegenmacker Mill, which became the fulcrum of the fighting, where we surprised in the ditch the advance guard of the enemy. From our seat beside the driver, Harrison and I loosed off our revolvers and killed the gun crew, all German storm troops, and captured their machine-gun.

This trophy lies beside me as I write.

Immediately we came into contact with my Scouts whom I had left behind, who, in close combat, were conducting a rifle duel with the enemy.

Masses of British Infantry in complete disorder and often led on by their own officers, were retiring on to Meteren. At the revolver-point I halted one battalion of North Country troops, commanded by a young major, and ordered them to turn about and occupy the Hoegenmacker Ridge. Three times I gave my order and put it also into writing. Each time I was refused. Finally I gave the officer, whose men refused to accept any order except through one of their own officers, two minutes in which to decide, with the alternative of being shot out of hand. At the end of those two minutes I struck him ; and the Regimental Sergeant-Major said to me, " That is what we have been

waiting for all day, sir." He led the companies up to the Ridge, though they proved but a feeble defence and leaked away in dribblets during the night.

My Scouts, St. Ledger, Bawn, Busby, Waller, Clarkson, Davis, Hughes, Maulkin, Partington, boys of eighteen and nineteen, showed extraordinary heroism, taking the leadership, and ordering the defence with astonishing coolness and initiative. No sooner was the lorry halted than we came under heavy machine-gun and rifle-fire.

I gave the order "Action Front !"

In a very few minutes eight guns were disposed on the northern slopes of the Windmill Hill Crest covering the approaches to Meteren. The lorry returned, bringing three of my companies into action, and I disposed them over a three-mile front, absolutely naked of defence, and one which we held, almost unaided and alone, despite most heavy attacks and severe losses against the assaults of six German Divisions, without relief for seven days.

The particular incident of going into action in this manner is probably the most thrilling in which organized machine-gunners have ever participated. The rapidity of action ; the extraordinary situation ; the perfect discipline and drill ; the setting of untouched farm-houses, copses, and quietly grazing cattle ; the flying civilians with their crazy carts piled high with household chattels and the retiring Infantry behind ; the magnificent targets obtained ; and the complete grip of the situation by, and determination of, Machine-Gun Commanders—this action takes the highest place for all time in the history of the Machine-Gun Corps, and is an epic of the tenacity and grit of the British soldier, well led, with his back to the wall fighting against great odds.

After an hour of the action, I made a very full reconnaissance with my Adjutant. We discovered in the estaminet beside the mill a crowd of stragglers, fighting drunk. We routed them out, and with a machine-gun trained on them sent them forward towards the enemy. They perished to a man.

Then, as we ourselves left the inn, we found that the advancing Germans had infiltrated between our gun posts, and we came under machine-gun fire at close range. Why we were not immediately torn to ribbons passes my comprehension. We dropped on to the ground in a field, fortunately heavily furrowed by fresh ploughing, and while machine-gun bullets flicked

past our ears and ripped the haversacks on our backs, we worked our way along down the furrows as rapidly as possible, clawing at the earth as we travelled on our stomachs.

At twelve noon the 1st Queen's began to come into line from the direction of Meteren, but had no information whatever, and I disposed Captain Avery's Company in the line while my Adjutant took that of Captain Carpenter.

With Avery I stormed the windmill which had fallen into the German hands and we recaptured it in a hand-to-hand fight with German storm troops.

The equipment for my Signallers was with the transport, but I put two men into the top of the windmill with handkerchiefs tied to sticks, so that from its eminence they could watch the moves of the enemy. One of these men was Corporal Noblett, who looked like his name, a great hulking fellow from the Yorkshire moors. He remained in the mill-top for three days until long after it had fallen again into German hands, and finally escaped back to our lines, after the mill had been blown down by our own artillery fire, attired in the uniform of a German soldier.

By two o'clock the left flank of the Queen's had been turned, the troops who were supposed to be in position, those stragglers whom I had collected, having dwindled away. I could see large bodies of the enemy concentrating about fifteen hundred yards south-east of Meteren and in the woods by Oostersteene. As they debouched we wracked them with machine-gun fire, and could observe enormous losses inflicted on them.

I finally collected a party consisting of at least twenty different Units under a Cyclists' Officer and disposed them to give local protection to my guns especially on my left flank towards Bailleul. Troops of every formation now began to dwindle into the line, rushed up in motor lorries from the Headquarters of the 9th Corps. Cooks, batmen, pioneers, even what seemed like a platoon of Town Majors under an Area Commandant.

By nightfall, the line though extremely thin was continuous and held.

I entered a farmyard in the village of Merris and found a foaming horse accoutred in the yard. I was held in conversation by the farmer, who alleged the horse to be his own. On leaving the house the horse was gone, no doubt that of one of an enemy patrol.

My good friend, Driver Sharples, had made journey after

journey through intense shell- and machine-gun fire, bringing ammunition, personnel, picks and shovels to my headquarters at the mill, and distributing tools round the Queen's outpost line.

We worked feverishly during the night throwing out a wide stockade around the machine-gun posts. But under cover of the mist, at dawn on the 13th, the enemy delivered a heavy attack on the centre of my line. The Queen's gave way and two of my gun posts were rushed, both officers in charge being killed, and the Company Commander wounded. Avery of the Queen's made two counter-attacks, and three times within one hour, the mill passed through our hands to those of the enemy and back again. I was not "at home" in the mill during the first early morning assault or probably I should not be here to tell the tale.

One of my sergeants, Perry, went out and rescued a gun which had fallen into enemy hands; and a corporal, Hurd, penetrated the enemy lines to a distance of two hundred yards and brought back another, which he got into action.

The early afternoon of the 13th was most critical. The enemy had continually pressed forward: we were under continuous shell- and machine-gun fire, suffering casualties all the while, and the Queen's, which had only recently been reinforced by very young and inexperienced soldiers, began to weaken all along the line. The attack had been pressed hard on our left, and I feared that we should find ourselves assaulted in the back. So, with two horses which I had found, I rode with my orderly, Bill Clegg, as far as Bailleul. There was not a soul in the streets of this once favourite billeting town. We galloped over the cobbles, while shells fell among the masonry, and brickdust filled our eyes and nostrils.

I was able to establish touch with a brigade on our left and to ask them to squeeze in to prevent the enemy from penetrating the village of Meteren. I did not think that it would be possible to maintain the line. We were running short of ammunition despite the exertions of Driver Sharples, had no spare barrels, and with the exception of the Cameronians, no further reinforcements came to my long and scattered line.

But at two o'clock on the 13th my Transport Officer, McQueen, who is now a school teacher in Inverness, arrived, and in a style reminiscent of the Royal Horse Artillery at an Aldershot field day, the fighting limbers with belt boxes, and small-arms ammunition were galloped through a hail of shell- and machine-gun fire to our gun positions; and my Mounted Orderlies were

with me, as far-seeing eyes and quick messengers to give me information from, or to carry orders to, any part of the line,

In the late afternoon German Cavalry galloped out from the cover of the copses to the south-east of Meteren but were decimated by our fire.

At dawn on the 14th a further very heavy attack was made on our positions, and wide gaps were made in the front covered by the Queen's and the Cameronians.

The enemy exploited these gains to full advantage, pushing forward light machine-guns with great rapidity. The Queen's, very much shaken, and the Cameronians again began to recede from their positions ; and on this morning our line was definitely maintained by the splendid devotion to duty by my machine-gunners who suffered severe losses.

I moved continually between my posts, sometimes on horse-back, and sometimes on foot, and witnessed the enemy piled dead before our guns. The heaviest losses were inflicted.

So critical was the situation that I issued orders to my sergeants in charge of gun teams that at any time that they saw British troops retiring they were to fire on them ; and from the mill I saw one of my gunners destroy a platoon of one regiment in full flight.

Between six and seven another determined attack was made on our front. I had sent back continuous report to General Mayne commanding the 19th Brigade, and so grave was the situation that he asked me to come to him in his headquarters in Meteren personally to report. He asked me whether it was possible for any line to be held south and east of Meteren pending the arrival of further reinforcements which could not be expected immediately.

I replied that this was possible. He turned over to my command two platoons of the 2nd New Zealand Entrenching Battalion. The line which I took up was that which up to the end of the operations on the 19th constituted our front line ; and this I now made our front line on the 14th. I could not have asked for or expected any better co-operation than that rendered by the New Zealanders. I issued orders immediately for the withdrawal of our guns to this line, and for them to be disposed in depth behind it. "The withdrawal to be carried out Section by Section and Gun by Gun with covering fire." Writing in my official War Diary for April 1918, I recorded, "No finer retirement could have been carried out. In the face of great enemy

opposition and in the teeth of heavy machine-gun fire at its outset it was carried out without loss to either personnel or material, and every gun was withdrawn by concealed approaches and with irreproachable discipline to the line to which the Infantry had retired with some disorder, and which was now held firm by a few New Zealand marksmen." This truth stood the test of critical examinations, as is evidenced by the generous award of decorations and medals among the men of my command.

By dawn on the 15th I had a good line. To this returned my Signallers Noblett and Bailey, both awarded with the D.C.M. On the morning of the 15th I called for a volunteer from among my Mounted Orderlies to reconnoitre the whole position. Driver McKay, riding my big black horse, "Old Bill," fleet of foot and a magnificent jumper, rode the whole length of the line under a hail of fire for three miles along the front of our posts, while I, observing him, noted his trail upon my map, and thus was able to mark the whole of our front. As he rode past the front of the 1st Queen's, the men rose from the little trenches which they had dug and cheered him to the echo. Another D.C.M.

Towards the end of the action on the 18th when our line was firmly established, and French troops were appearing as reinforcement, I went out with my Adjutant to make a further reconnaissance. As we were returning to my headquarters, the enemy placed a barrage of gas shells all around us. We were riding bicycles and breathing heavily.

Though over and over again we had conducted gas-helmet instructions, neither Harrison nor I had ourselves experimented with this clumsy apparatus. It was minutes before we could get the masks over our faces, and already our lungs were filled with gas. Too many minutes. A little white dog beside the bicycles coughed itself to death at our feet. We staggered a few yards to a building, and found it to be an artillery headquarters. There we collapsed on the floor.

I do not remember anything until I discovered myself still lying on the floor, sometime at night in pitch darkness, with the sound of heavy rifle-fire close beside me. Harrison and I got up and spent the remainder of the night wandering over the fields near Flêtre. My throat was raw, my lungs wheezed horribly, and my head buzzed. I had no clear recollection of anything, except a most vivid dream, or was it reality? That I did not know.

My dim consciousness realized only that the Germans had undermined the whole of the British front, had sent thousands of men along the galleries, and after exploding their ends, had debouched in our rear.

The impression was most extraordinarily vivid ; and years later I wrote it—"The 'W' Plan."

At dawn we found ourselves in a valley, and up on a hillside overlooking it we saw British troops and limbers, all the familiarity of a Machine-Gun Battalion. We went across the field towards them ; and as we approached, faces familiar regarded us with astonishment, as men returned from the dead.

I learnt that we had been absent three days. I had been reported as killed in action, and already a new Commanding Officer, one Colonel Roberts of the Middlesex Regiment, had arrived to take over command of my beloved battalion. He did not wait long after he had seen me in person. I had some reputation, and he too had some, to keep.

I went to Divisional Headquarters and my General welcomed me as one from the grave. He insisted that I should be his guest and I was petted and coddled as I had never been before in all the history of the campaign. Everyone plied me with questions as to how the line had been saved. But while I lounged in idleness at Divisional Headquarters, I sent for Pooh-ba Thompson, and proceeded to level praiseworthy blackmail on my Divisional Commander by asking for decorations for all.

For this one action, three Military Crosses, fourteen D.C.M.s, and twenty-five Military Medals were awarded to those under my command, while I secured a D.C.M. for Sharples and a Military Medal for the lad who raced a Ford van across the fields to Meteren.

I was most strongly recommended myself, both by my Divisional Commander and by General Mayne of the 19th Brigade, for the Victoria Cross. I have been given to understand since that this was not awarded because there were no eye-witnesses. The evidence of private soldiers might have been taken, but then I fear we might have been turned into a mutual admiration society, and the only other evidence available was that of thousands of Germans, most of whom were deceased. I was overjoyed at the honour done to my battalion, which I believe received more decorations for this one battle action than were given to any other battalion in the whole of the Army on any one of the battle fronts on which it was engaged. It still holds the

record, also, for more honours in one action than have ever been given to any battalion in English history, yet I have been disappointed that I did not receive the highest award, for at High Wood General Baird had recommended me for a D.S.O., and G.H.Q. preferred to overlook his recommendation.

When Sir Douglas Haig inspected the Battalion a month later, he told me personally that the action at Meteren was one of the finest fought by any troops on the Western Front ; and when I met him at his headquarters in 1919, he reaffirmed what he had then stated.

On the 18th April I received the following telegram :

9th Corps Wire.

"The Commander-in-Chief has just been at Corps Headquarters. He would have liked to see all ranks now fighting on the 9th Corps front and to tell each one of them of his personal appreciation of the magnificent fight they have made and are making. He would have liked to shake hands with each individual and thank him for what he has done. He has not time for this, but has asked me to give everybody this message."

9TH CORPS SPECIAL ORDER No. 2.

The following "Record" is made of the action described below.

33RD BATTALION MACHINE-GUN CORPS.

12th-19th April, 1918.

"On the night of the 11th-12th April, the enemy had captured both Merville and Estaires, some seven miles south of Meteren, but the situation was somewhat obscure, and machine-guns, in conjunction with the 19th Infantry Brigade, took up an outpost line covering the approaches east and south of Meteren. By 10.30 a.m. on the 12th April the enemy had advanced very rapidly, both from the east and from the south, and had it not been for the excellent use made of an abandoned motor lorry which quickly brought up eight more guns and teams, Meteren would have undoubtedly fallen into the enemy hands. By skilful handling of his machine-guns Lieutenant-Colonel Hutchison was able to hold off the enemy and fill all up gaps that occurred in our line so that by nightfall on the 12th April the line, though thinly held, was continuous. On the 13th a heavy hostile attack was successfully dealt with, during which the enemy must have suffered enormous losses. In one instance, two hundred horsemen were decimated by the fire of one section under

2nd Lieutenant Watts. In spite of the hard fighting of the two previous days, night harassing fire was maintained during the night of 13th-14th. The 14th was probably the most critical day of these operations. At dawn the enemy launched heavy attacks against our positions and our line was penetrated in many places. The enemy exploited these gains to full advantage by pushing forward his light machine-guns. On this occasion, very valuable service was rendered by Major W. C. Andrew, Second-in-Command, who handled his machine-guns skilfully, and by filling gaps and forming defensive flanks, prevented the enemy from penetrating our line to any depth. The maintenance of our line was undoubtedly due to the splendid devotion to duty and initiative displayed by the machine-gunners, whose losses were very severe. This line was held by machine-guns in face of great odds until ordered to withdraw on the evening of the 14th instant, this withdrawal being carried out in the most creditable manner, without further loss either to personnel or material, showing the excellent state of training and efficiency within the Battalion.

"On the 16th April the enemy again made a determined attack after heavy bombardment against our positions south-east of Meteren, during which the machine-gunners did great execution. It was during this attack that the enemy gained a footing in Meteren, where he was held, and the line handed over in this position on the night of the 18th-19th April.

"Throughout the operations that action of the 33rd Battalion Machine-Gun Corps very materially assisted in preventing the enemy from capturing the Meteren position and exploiting the gains made by him during the first day's fighting.

(Signed) W. MAXWELL SCOTT,
Brigadier-General,
General Staff, 9th Corps."

I always look back on this battle action, not only as the supreme achievement of my life, but as a most thrilling episode in the history of a whole generation. Chronicling these events some twelve years afterwards, I can give to them their true perspective ; and the narrative has the veracity to be expected of an account based upon war diaries compiled in the field of operations, in which I actually participated. I know now what I could not have known then, except perhaps from the personal messages written to me by friends on the staffs of the



"WITH BACKS TO THE WALL." HAIG'S FAMOUS ORDER FULFILLED

The 33rd Battalion Machine-Gun Corps, almost unaided, withstands the assault of six German Divisions between the 14th and 18th April, 1918, inflicting enormous losses upon the enemy. The scene of this action was east of Meteren village, south-west of Baillieu. The German Drive towards the Belgian hills and the Channel ports was held at this point by the action of this Battalion.

From an oil painting by the Author.

9th Corps, the 2nd Army, and at G.H.Q., that the action of my battalion during those days saved the whole front of the British Army.

Without that stubborn defence by machine-gunners and without the tactical organization of a Machine-Gun Battalion under one direction and command, those six German Divisions, the vanguard of hordes behind, would have pushed on swiftly to the eminence of Cassel but a few miles behind Meteren, would have seized the whole line of the Belgian hills to the south of Ypres, would have cut the line of communications of the British Army through St. Omer to the Channel Ports, and would have divided the British Army from its French Allies, and thrown our whole Army back upon the sea.

Nothing stood between St. Omer, disorganization, and rout except the 33rd Battalion of the Machine-Gun Corps. This is an historic fact.

And in reflecting upon that most glorious and vivid experience, I can now reveal some of the innermost secrets of my heart.

I knew we were in for a bloody business. Everyone said so, and it was in the atmosphere. My command was largely new, a host of untried youngsters, kids of eighteen and nineteen. I am always grateful for these boys, and cursed myself eternally for what I had to teach them. But my job was to win the War. I had to deny myself the pleasure of appearing to be heroic before my men—and I can imagine this must be a glorious intoxication—and go about my job organizing little groups into a sense of sanity, infusing courage by appealing to the manhood in men turned curs, threatening, cajoling, even shooting as a salutary lesson. And I had also to refuse the fun of shooting back at the enemy—and it is fun under war conditions—because the brains of my life were wanted to organize a front which was rapidly decomposing.

I had formed a little body of battalion scouts and mounted orderlies, sixteen scouts and eight mounted orderlies. Not one of these was over twenty years of age. They were fresh, clean, bright-eyed, just little adventurers. They had no vices, no fears. They lived with me : where I went they went.

It was like a school-treat, with this difference, that it was my job to harden their hearts to shocks, and spoil their minds to the sight and sound of death and bestiality—a face half shot off turned up to the sky is not pleasant ; a man with his bowels torn out by high explosive makes a strong man sick ; an old corpse bloated

and black is terrifying—so I had to make them coarse to stand the racket of things, which I loathed personally, and which I feared too, lest they should weaken, when I needed most their confidence, and the power and inexperience of their youth, and their manhood. I am not neurotic, nor ever was. I had lived pretty hard, and had seen by that time more than three years of war. The deliberate coarsening of the minds of lads by profanity and jibe, anything beastly so long as it neither hurt the brain, like drink, nor the body, like women, I used to steel these lads for the task which one day would come. I trained them diligently as scouts, and demanded their confidence and loyalty with every artifice of which a commander can make use, in order that in any part of a battlefield, they should be my eyes telling me accurately what I must know without embroidery, but telling me also without an eye to the main chance—safety or glory. And I knew each one individually, just for what he was worth. I tested them—a walk here, ten minutes and a cigarette there ; the lad by himself as himself, not in the artificiality of the presence of a corporal, or their comrades—I needed them to do my will : I required their confidence, my external and internal spies, my intelligence corps, my scouts. Prior to Meteren, with a little weeding, I had proved them. Throughout that battle, I know without question that where my scouts went, there I went myself.

The history of the 33rd Division, and that of the Machine-Gun Battalion, gives some details of the practical effect of such training, but they, for the best possible reasons, tell nothing of what it cost me personally in giving it. I still remain ashamed that war's necessity—that is the cold analysis of the sole requirement in war, namely to win—compelled me deliberately so to debase the souls of men. It is not as though I lacked the finer instincts, or like so many others had submerged these in an orgy of drink. I am rather artist than soldier, poet than thruster. I love beauty in nature, in art, literature, in little children, and in the minds of philosophers. But had I shrunk from so training these trusty souls, as the central fact, the unifying force in a scarcely united unit, I am quite sure I should have failed at Meteren, and my men, too, would have failed as dismally as did the hundreds of men, become curs, who were running in panic down the long roads from the east.

No one who has not witnessed it can possibly appreciate the sense of horror and shame conveyed by soldiers in panic. And when these are British soldiers witnessed by the eyes of one

trained in the tradition of Badajos, Corunna, Waterloo, Darghai, and Mafeking, the shame is of the kind which commits a Japanese general to *hari-kari*.

I can still see, as some horrible dream, hundreds of British soldiers, rifles and ammunition intact, streaming down the roads, flying in the face of the enemy. They appeared like whipped curs : men in panic can be just so. The roads were filled with them, if not actually running, all moving fast, bunched like sheep, and there were ambulances at the C.C.S. evacuating wounded or more probably bringing them in. I do not know, and did not stop to inquire. The retreat, rout, panic, call it what you will, must have proceeded very fast. That is what I thought. I asked some of the men where they were going. No one seemed to know. They said swarms of Germans were behind and that everyone had been killed or captured. A Captain said he was retiring to the hills behind. That would be at Cassel, or so far as he was concerned in his obvious haste, at Calais. I struck him. I doubt whether it was justified, but I have never been worried about it at all. No qualm of conscience. Then I collected my handful of boys and we pedalled our bicycles.

We saw German greys from a meadow but not an English soldier in sight. It seemed quite silly. They were about four hundred yards away, and turned a light machine-gun upon us. One of my boys got his boot ripped and the front fork of my bicycle was so bent that the wheel refused to go round. I possessed the strongest impulse to do something heroic. I remember feeling so at the time, but two rifles and a revolver are not much good against a machine-gun, so I legged it back to the C.C.S., and it was there that I persuaded the young man with the Ford ambulance to motor me to Meteren.

Then there was the estaminet on the Hoegenmacker Ridge. British soldiers mad with drink. Some inside and others shouting outside with bottles. They had been filled with funk and now were filled with drink. There was nobody there to make an appeal to their manhood, and, even if there had been, I doubt if any such appeal could have been effective. Two days later I saw the bottles, empty, and in front of them a large number of twisted corpses. Those were the men I sent out to their death. I can still one in particular, a great kilted Scot. He was crazy with drink, fighting drunk, but with no fight in him. I saw his huge body lurch forward over the hill-top, and then the great torso, huge shoulders and waving arms, went limp and he

disappeared from view. He was a filthy sight afterwards, the whole body churned with machine-gun bullets, the clotted pools of blood stinking with wine. So this pack at least was successful in drowning, once and for all, their sorrows in drink.

But my battalion held, and you may guess the reason why.

AWARDED DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER

London Gazette dated 16th September, 1918.

Capt. (T/Lieut.-Col.) Graham Seton HUTCHISON,
M.C., Argyll and Suth'd Highrs., attd. M.G. Corps.

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty at METEREN, from 12th to 17th April, 1918, while in command of three companies of machine-gunners. He drove off four heavy enemy attacks with great slaughter. He handled his guns excellently, and displayed great determination and initiative under the hottest fire.

Monsieur Clemenceau, the "Old Tiger," came to us on the 21st April. He was clad in a soft felt hat perched anyhow on his head, baggy knee-breeches, brown and badly fitting gaiters over his black boots, a stick and a very pleasant air. He thanked us for the part we had played in the defence; and he was visibly moved by what he saw.

In his *British Campaigns in Europe 1914-1918* Conan Doyle wrote of this action—"The 33rd British Machine-Gun Corps under Colonel Hutchison, an officer who until he was gassed was a tower of strength to the defence. . . . Everything seemed to be in a state of chaos, and the line was for the moment absolutely fluid. The fall of Merville and of Estaires had been exploited with extraordinary energy by the Germans, who were rushing on at the very heels of the retiring and often disorganized troops, who were dead-beat after two days and nights of constant exertion. It was all-important to build up some sort of line south of Meteren, but events were moving so fast that it was doubtful if it could be done. It was here that the value of the new machine-gun organization, perfected during the winter, was brilliantly exemplified. Colonel Hutchison was able to throw forward the whole of his guns to make up for the local weakness of the infantry, and he ran great risks in doing so, since he had only broken men and stragglers to man the gaps between his gun positions. The crisis was such, however, that any risk had to be

taken, and the 33rd Battalion of the Machine-Gun Corps saved the situation."

Writing to me years later Conan Doyle said, "You are the sort of man I expected—but very young to have achieved so much."

CHAPTER XV

TO THE ARMISTICE

Scrounging a Band—Fun behind the lines—Enter the Americans—Tar Heels—Mistaken for Rothenstein—Blown up—Hospital—Open warfare—Memories of 1914—Armistice with the troops—Father Christmas—Pinney and Baird—A History—Authors and others write.

WE were relieved from the Meteren battle by the 14th Chasseurs Division, and, after a few days of re-organization behind Cassel, went back again to take over from the French, under the frowning eyes of Mont Kemmel, beside Dickebusch Lake.

I took over from a French captain, a gay fatalist, and breakfasted him in the morning. He ate his porridge with a knife and fork and seasoned it with whisky to make of it a thoroughly Scotch dish. Then he disappeared through the smoke-cloud of a heavy barrage clad in a long blue overcoat which flowed behind him like a dressing-gown, wearing the Légion d'Honneur and Croix de Guerre swinging on his overcoat. I found his body later.

It was at this time that I formed a military band. During the Meteren operations, among the stragglers I had found a band detached from its Unit, the instrumentalists of which belonged to the Manchester Regiment. During the Meteren operations these men did yeoman service to my battalion carrying ammunition and filling belts. I was loathe to part with them. I therefore sent a telegram to the Base asking for permission to "transfer forty specialists" to the Machine-Gun Corps. This request was granted as an order. Possession was nine points of the law. But I had already received an order to send the band to a famous regular battalion. The Transfer Order obviously overrode the former instruction. The band remained and commenced to play; and quoting the authority of my telegram I kept them together. Then I telegraphed to my friends, Hawkes, in London, and took £600 from my canteen fund with which I re-equipped



Piece	Title.	Composer.
1. MARCH	"THE ENTRY OF THE GLADIATORS"	T. FUGA.
2. OVERTURE	"POET AND PEASANT"	SUPPÉ.
3. WALTZ	"THOUGHTS"	K. ALFORD.
4. SELECTION	"LA BOHEME"	G. PUCCINI.
5. DESCRIPTIVE GALOP	"THE MOTOR KID"	T. BIDGOOD.
6. SELECTION	"CARMINETTA"	E. LASSALL.
7. SERENADE	"LA PALOMA"	S. YARDIER.
8. 3 DANCES FROM	KING HENRY VIII	E. GERMAN.
	(NO. 1 "MORRIS DANCE" NO. 2 "SHEPHERD'S DANCE"	
	NO. 3 "KING DANCE")	
	"LA BRESANCONNE"	
	"GOD SAVE THE KING"	

Elizabeth

PRINTED BY THE AUTHOR
 10, ST. MARK'S PLACE, LONDON
 1918

W. J. L. 11.
W. J. L. 11.
W. J. L. 11.
 33rd BATT. MACHINE GUN CORPS.

A PROGRAMME OF MUSIC PERFORMED BY THE BAND OF THE
 AUTHOR'S BATTALION AT LORD PLUMER'S HEADQUARTERS, BY
 COMMAND

The programme, designed by the author, was autographed by Their Majesties
 King Albert and Queen Elizabeth of Belgium.

the band. Within a fortnight I possessed a band of forty-two performers.

No one who took part in the War did not acquire some proficiency in "scrounging," "getting," "making," and other similar acts allied with the war-time legality, both moral and legal, of stealing. My act itself has been described as the biggest ramp of the War. At any rate as a conjuring trick, that is the art of producing something instantaneously without being detected, it probably rivals any other similar trick performed during the War.

Later my band was honoured by a command performance before His Majesty King George at Lovie Château on the occasion of his visit to the 2nd Army in June 1918, and again it played by command before Their Majesties the King and Queen of the Belgians in July 1918 at 2nd Army Headquarters. Their Majesties personally autographed the band programme, one of my treasured souvenirs, and Lord Plumer wrote "Wishes to convey to you his congratulations on the excellent performance of your band on the occasion of the visit of Their Majesties the King and Queen of the Belgians. The programme was much appreciated by Their Majesties."

While in this Sector, I organized a gymkhana and boxing tournament to which all were invited ; and in perfect weather we produced a tournament, attended by several thousands, which rivalled in its excitement anything shown by Tex Rickard or any of the modern super-fisticuff producers. We possessed no Carnera, but my chief shoeing-smith had an arm like an anvil and he slew all comers.

We were bombed unmercifully from the air by night. A most nerve-racking proceeding. I slept in a grave eight feet by four, raised on wooden boards. I was quite safe in this unless a torpedo made a direct hit, in which case it would not matter and there would be no necessity for grave-digging. All very convenient ; and after a night or two, despite the noise, I slept quite soundly.

During the minor operations on the 14th July, 1918, in which we co-operated, twenty-nine prisoners of the 5th and 8th Companies, 166th Infantry Regiment, of the 31st Division, were captured. This Division is recruited in the Rhineland Province, in which is situated Cologne, one of the most beautiful cathedral cities in the world.

Upon these prisoners, almost without exception, were found

the most revolting photographic picture postcards, depicting British dead.

In some cases, these photographs showed our dead stripped and mutilated, being grinned upon by German soldiery. In one case, the photograph showed a dead Highlander with his kilt up to his chest, the whole of the lower limbs exposed naked, and a German helmet placed over his privates ; whilst a small crowd of German soldiery stood facing the camera grinning.

A postcard was taken from one of these prisoners. There were several copies of this distributed among them. It is the least revolting which I saw. None of these men showed signs of any shell wound ; they none of them showed limbs missing or death agony ; they were in regular lines and were stripped ; one man had his hands tied behind his back ; one man whose face was clearly seen, had only recently died ; one man had his left hand in his pocket. From these indications it appeared more than probable that these men were taken prisoners, were ordered to strip, and then brutally murdered in cold blood. It is most improbable that a cart driven by a cleanly dressed soldier, would have been present on a battlefield, unscarred by shell-holes, to carry, as a mock hearse, men so freshly dead.

No white man, few savages, can look on even this photograph without feelings of disgust, rage, and horror.

One night my mules suffered terrible casualties, so I determined to be revenged. I placed thirty-two machine-guns on the tops of posts, with their muzzles trained to the skies. We all got out of our grave-holes when a whistle was blown announcing the arrival of the night hawks, and "stood to." Then we heard a buzzing overhead but could see nothing, the skies being muffled with cloud, so thirty-two guns hosed the black shroud over our heads. Within a second the aerial fly had walked into our parlour. The thing burst into flames and swooped to earth just beside the camp. A terrific cheer broke from the gunners and we rushed madly across the fields, half naked in our shirt-tails, towards the wreck of the shattered fabric. The occupants, one an officer and the other a sergeant, were both dead, and the Black Cross of the night hawk decorated my headquarters always afterwards, while the machine-gun was presented by me to the Glasgow War Museum.

It was very peaceful at Dickebusch ; and we constructed a fine camp near St. Jan Ter Biezen, named Boone, after the farm-house in whose pastures it was situated. Boone Camp was

an athletic and scholastic paradise. I wonder who now inhabits its enclosure and violates its transport lines, where vicious mules ate the trees and kicked their drivers. No runners now dash out from its precincts for an early morning run. No scouts for a bathe in the forbidden pool, defying wire and willows ; no footballs seek refuge in that little central pond where the blue caddis-fly dances. Sports, boxing ; the Shrapnels, our concert party ; the band and barrage drill with which the happy summer hours of 1918, on our rest days, were beguiled, are things of the past.

It was at this time that the invasion of the Americans began.

The Plenipotentiaries arrived *en masse*, and struck me at first glance as a concourse of very grave men with extremely tight uniforms. There was much saluting, handshaking, and introductions, a diversion being produced by my band in full war paint, which vigorously played the "Star-Spangled Banner."

Remarkable amongst the Americans were some personalities. There was one Company Commander whose whimsical mannerisms and quaint humour endeared him to all ranks. Tours round the guns with him were always full of interest. To all I had to say he gave a grave attention. He never lost the grim humour of the thing. The loud report at dead of night of a battery of ours would only provoke from him the caustic injunction, hardly audible, "Give 'em HELL !"

Very different was his Second-in-Command. He was as bulky and rubicund as was his Company Officer lean and pale. He expended so much energy in talking and laughing that he had none left for his legs (which, in any case, could never adequately have carried his body !). Accordingly, like Diogenes, he remained in his dugout, and from its darkness delivered oracular judgment on the War. He was a great politician. He claimed to know the price of every man's vote in North Carolina !

The real American, as we had pictured him, did not arrive in our midst until a week or two later. We had decided that these quiet, thinking men of North Carolina were not at all the popular type of "Yankee." Some of them were even proud to claim English descent ! We wanted to justify our conception of the slack-jawed, keen-eyed man of quaint jargons and turns of speech that Mark Twain and others had introduced to us.

When Captain English arrived, we knew immediately that "the goods had been delivered." His first introduction was to unpeel before our eyes a cunningly twisted packet of chewing-

gum ; and on noticing our admiring gaze as he capaciously took it between his jaws, his hand produced sundry other packets which he proceeded to hand round. Then, while we all chewed, he narrated his complete philosophical scheme with reference to the Ypres Sector and the American attachment.

He had "cottoned on" to the whole thing within five minutes. He only wanted the practical experience ; he was here to learn ; we could do what we liked with him or his company ; we were the right stuff ; he saw that clearly. His journey up to Smyth Farm was a series of quixotic experiences, such as had come to no other man living ; he had been blown up by a gas shell, and by a miracle had adjusted his box respirator before reaching the ground. He had seen all colours of Verrey lights in the sky, and had theories on the use of each one of them. He had floundered about in ditches and shell-holes until he had completely lost direction, but with unique forethought he had measured the bearing from nowhere to Smyth Farm, and by his trusty compass (which had never failed him in all preceding campaigns) he had at last attained his objective. Despite a forty-mile march that day he was prepared to go round the Ypres Sector this very night and learn what there was to learn.

And, to do him justice, he did learn, and quickly, too. He seemed to jump into the idea of warfare at once. All the technicalities of machine-gun defence were to him matters of intense interest.

The rank and file were slow, even lethargic, but they had a most intense hate for the Hun and always expressed a keen desire to go over the top and be at him. They took an almost childish interest in the effect of our shelling. One sergeant, in particular, used to peer continuously over the parapet, at the same time remarking, "Say, Loo-tenant, she shure is hitting them some." This was the only remark he ever was known to pass.

After the period of attachment was ended Captain Wentworth W. Pierce, who commanded the Battalion, wrote to me as follows :

8th August, 1918.

"It appears, to our great sorrow, that our Machine-Gun Battalion is about to be relieved from duty with your troops, and I trust that you will permit me, in a humble manner, to attempt to express to you and your most efficient Officers, my

deep and sincere appreciation of the most thorough and excellent Instruction which you have given us during these three short weeks, and also to thank you for the many courtesies that you have rendered us, and the kindest and most chivalrous hospitality which you and your Officers have shown us.

"It is very gratifying to me to observe the marked improvement in the Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers and Men of the seven Machine-Gun Companies under the guidance and tutorship of you and your most worthy Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers.

"I would also like to thank the rank and file of your enlisted men for their deep interest and untiring efforts in the instruction of our Machine-Gunners.

"I feel quite sure, from observation and what I have heard, that no other American Machine-Gun Battalion has had such good advantages as this one while undergoing instruction in Europe. I am sure that the American Officers over us have observed the great improvement which has been brought about through our instruction under your Command.

"We are to be congratulated that we were attached to the 33rd Battalion Machine-Gun Corps for instruction.

"You know that most of this organization is from North Carolina. Yes, 'We are Tar Heels born and Tar Heels bred,' and when we die, 'we will be Tar Heels dead.'

"After this mighty conflict shall have ended, and our flags are flying victoriously, we want you and your Officers and soldiers to visit us in America, and we will show you some things that are neither in open or trench warfare, which will give us the greatest amount of pleasure."

This seems to be sufficient answer to General Pershing's complaint in his recently published reminiscences that British troops were low in morale and unfitted to train American legions.

In 1923, as a member of the Delegation of British Business Men, I visited the United States, and first among my engagements was a renewal of comradeship with my friends of the 30th American Division, whom I visited in North Carolina.

At the end of August, moving by night in a convoy of twenty-two lorries, we were moved to Rocquigny, across our old battlefields beside Albert and Bapaume. The final offensive.

Although enormous strides had been made to rebuild the

railway it was still many miles behind, and completed work was frequently destroyed by delayed-action mines which still further hampered the progress. The roads, too, had suffered considerably both from shell-fire and neglect ; and with the enormous lorry traffic upon them, were in most cases nothing but broken tracks with a rough stone surface. Villages and farm buildings, as such, had ceased to exist, every structure having been either destroyed by shell-fire, or deliberately blown up and gutted by the retreating enemy. Similarly also, the bridges over the Canal du Nord and crossing the small streams had to be rebuilt to carry the increasing traffic-demand upon them. The progress of horse transport and infantry was confined solely to tracks across the country. After having passed over the desolation of the 1916 battlefields, except for the complete destruction of the villages, the countryside had not been seriously disturbed. In certain localities, where heavy fighting had occurred during the German offensive of March 1918, the ground was much broken by shell-holes, but otherwise was easily passable.

Considering the obstacles which it had to overcome, it seems almost incredible that the British advance could have been made so rapidly ; and that it continued, after the conquest of the Hindenburg Line, in October, even more rapidly.

As was usual, we were thrown into the battle where the advance was held up. In front of Villers Guislain, the Hindenburg Line was held by a system of defended works of length and great depth. We attacked on the 15th September. The enemy on our front were the Alpine Corps, who during the whole course of the War had gained a reputation for the possession of the highest fighting qualities. The 14th Jäger Regiment was positioned opposite our front. The fighting swayed backwards and forwards between the two lines, attack being followed by counter-attack during the whole of the day. Few prisoners were taken, and the German machine-gunners held tenaciously to their ground, inflicting most heavy losses on the 98th Brigade and upon one of my companies.

In this battle we were subjected to gas-shelling of a peculiarly horrible character. High explosive shells of all calibres seemed to contain gas. Limbs were burnt : lungs gripped as in a vice ; and the wounded came back coloured green in the face, retching, and in ghastly agony. The enemy put up a hitherto unmet-with resistance, and our assaults produced no results.

While awaiting orders to attack in front of Meath Post, I was

sketching the German lines beyond the Canal de St. Quentin. A gunner came up to me and asked, "Are you Will Rothenstein?" I did not then know the name of the great man, one of the official artists. Pointing towards the chalk lines on which our shells were bursting, I replied, "I think your friend is *over there!*" I imagined, as had been my fate more than once before, that he took me for a spy.

But I had met Orpen, the master painter of war, in an estaminet at Cassel. I had heard he was about, and being an enthusiastic sketcher sought him out. It was, as I recollect it, a most ribald evening. Years later we met again, and he inscribed his fascinating work "An Onlooker in France" with a self-portrait, hand uplifted with a glass of Bubbly—"How it was written." Apart from his superb portraits, Orpen painted the atmosphere of war on the Western Front, a supreme pictorial record.

While riding my sure-footed second war horse, "Kitty," who never even flicked an ear to a shell-burst, passing through Villers Guislain, a shell burst under her. My next experience was to discover myself on a stretcher beneath a blanket, lying in darkness outside an aid post, and all around me the most appalling nauseating stench. I vomited violently, and sat up. This diversion on my part appeared to arouse the interest of a wounded man sitting outside awaiting attention.

He murmured "Gawd," and then peered at me. I gathered from him that I was supposed to be dead. So I got up, but found that my neck was very stiff and my left leg hurt me horribly and would not support my body. By the entrance to the aid post I found my groom, Bill Clegg, looking very glum and drinking a cup of tea. He, too, apparently was accompanying the corpse to its burial as a last act of devotion.

What had happened in fact was that the shell had exploded under the belly of my horse while a machine-gun had ripped its back and withers, and I had come down somewhere out of the air in the middle of the mess. I was, of course, stunned and unconscious, and smothered from head to foot in the flesh and blood of my mount. I had given no sign of life, so had been collected in the evening by a stretcher party, after lying on the battlefield for the best part of day, and my body carted away for burial. Until I vomited. So the Medical Officer tied a label on me, and after a long journey in an ambulance I was packed into a hospital train.

My throat was swathed in bandages and I realized that a number of teeth had disappeared. I could swallow nothing ; but this inconvenience was nothing compared with the frightful pain in my left knee whenever I tried to stir. But the train was comfort indeed ; and after a night of travel, I found myself again in an ambulance and my body was deposited at No. 6 Red Cross Hospital (Lady Murray's) among the pine forests of Hardelot.

They bathed me and then put me into a ward with six other officers. Then they bandaged me and I dropped off to sleep. When I awoke a fresh breeze was blowing from the sea through the wide-flung windows, gently fanning my face. I glanced out through the window at the white-flecked blue waters as some great ship, following the curve of the coastline, slowly entered the harbour accompanied by a busy escort. And I could see the white cliffs of the Homeland standing just beyond the horizon. I watched the morning leave-boat steam out from the harbour, the whirling seagulls in its wake, and then I saw that there was a nurse sitting beside me. I was desperately hungry, and she had anticipated this. I swallowed hot soup, and then revived.

In the bed opposite to me was a boy in the Flying Corps. They had already cut off his foot, but he did not know it, and a wicker cradle beneath the bedclothes raised them above the shattered stump. When the doctor bandaged it he tried to see what they were doing, and then later in the morning they carried him away and severed the leg below the knee.

The nurse, I shall never forget her, saved that life. The men in the ward were all desperately wounded, their physical afflictions so great that now peace was all they desired. For long hours the nurse watched beside the boy as he raved and babbled of horrors which she could only dimly picture, who alternatively prayed and cursed, and who finally under her ministrations lay quietly beneath the soothing influence of morphia. She remained beside the bedside all that day, throughout the night and until late in the afternoon on the following day. Then he came back from some no-man's-land of his own. She remained thus, the conscious victor over the wounded man's unconsciousness : the firm determined flow of her will stilled the waves of a distraught mind in the whirlpools of insanity. And when he knew, as he did immediately, that his leg was gone, she forced those waves in unison with her own mind to flow gently on into the placid stream of a woman's love. The nurse had

triumphed in a realm in which surgical and medical skill could play no part. The inseparable psychological and physiological structure of this woman's self had won the airman's personality from the kingdom beyond the reach of the surgeon's knife, denied to the chemistry of the physician.

But it was my turn. No bone in my leg had been broken, but the patella of the knee-cap was cracked, and every ligament which joins the muscles of the calf, and binding the knee-cap to the shin, with the thigh had snapped. An Italian masseur came to me daily with hands like wrought steel and fingers of velvet ; while the surgeon sewed up the hole in my throat and cleaned out the holes from which the teeth had been shot away.

A bullet had entered my mouth from underneath the chin, and except for carrying away a few teeth had come clean away through its aperture. It only took three days to mend that up ; and I was urged to walk. I hobbled around the hospital and its grounds on crutches, and so soon as I realized that nothing serious was the matter, I wrote urgent letters to General Pinney asking him to appoint no new Commanding Officer to my battalion. But my Adjutant telegraphed to me that a new Commander had been appointed by G.H.Q. after I had been reported wounded and a casualty.

My mind fretted with desperate anxiety. My battalion was more than a wife. So after eight days of hospital confinement, I sent a telegram to a young friend, Bill Piper, an airman of the 10th Squadron, asking him to come and see me in hospital, with a motor car. The next day Piper arrived, and I went for a walk with my crutches in the grounds of the hospital.

And then Piper took me away to the headquarters of his squadron. I spent the night there, and next morning, in a tender, made the long journey across the battlefields to Poix du Nord, not far from Le Cateau. The Divisional Commander, who with every amiability and affection had pardoned all my unruliness, was a little perplexed by my arrival ; but as I was there, and especially because he wanted me there, the new Commanding Officer was returned to store, and I took charge of the Battalion to lead it into action in the capture of Englefontaine on the 25th October, one of our most glorious victories.

General Pinney received this message from the Mayor after the battle.

"The Mairie of Englefontaine, which met this afternoon in a cellar of this village, begs to express to you in name of the 1200

inhabitants freed by the British Army its deepest feelings of hearty gratitude."

And General Pinney sent this message to me.

"General Pinney thanks you and all ranks under your command for your great and successful efforts during the recent operations."

A further great drive was then ordered as an operation to be conducted by the 5th Corps, which included the penetration and capture of the Forêt de Mormal, an immense and very thickly planted forest of dense undergrowth extending from west to east for over seven miles. The operation included the passage of the River Sambre and the capture of the important town of Maubeuge. I was sitting chatting to Kiddie, my regimental sergeant-major, when a motor cyclist brought this message to my headquarters in a farm-house.

It was with Kiddie that I had fired the first Vickers gun on the Western Front from over the sand-bags, opposite to Bois Grenier, in early December 1914; and we were very near to Le Cateau, where the 93rd had first met the German Army in that disaster of which I heard on the decks of the *Edinburgh Castle*.

I had remarked to Kiddie how curious it was that in casting the mind's eye back across the memories of war, the incidents which seemed to stand out most clearly were those connected with the weather. Grey evening clouds hovering like vultures ready to swoop down with outspread wings to devour the landscape, and then that devastating body-tearing barrage. The brilliantly bright and warm sunny morning, and then the field of carnage. A night upon which the flying clouds brushed past the cold rays of the moon, sometimes lifting their train to allow a shaft of silver to steal down upon mortal man stalking on a raiding party in a watery waste of shell-holes: and then over the top, somehow through the wire, down into the Boche trench, a bayonet-stab here, the flash of a pistol, then another and another; people shouting, machine-guns going like hell anywhere and everywhere, rockets soaring up into the air, chunks of mud and tufts of earth flying round your ears; grab somebody by the arm, he is whimpering, he'll do; pull him out of the trench behind you, run like the devil, back through the wire, topple over into your own trench, badly winded, shrapnel bursting all round: your skin's whole; drag your prisoner down into your dugout, have a look at him, a pudding-faced kid,

unwashed, unshaved, frightened out of his life, knows nothing; belongs to the 3rd Guard Grenadier Regiment. Prussian Guards! My God! Give him a tot of rum and a Woodbine. Half your men don't get back, and all you have got for your trouble is a human spud!

Kiddie was telling me the story of Le Cateau.

We are sitting in the cornfields, lazily leaning against the little stocks, whose long purple shadows lie stretched upon the ground, sleeping or smoking; a snatch of melody from several voices floats through the still evening air; equipment and rifles are lying here and there. Against the homestead farm a group of officers sit chatting and studying a map. It is a peaceful scene. A loud crack, a sheet of flame, a column of smoke and a cloud of brickdust. It is the trumpet-call of war! The eastern end of the farm-house is rent by a huge hole. The air is filled with sound—the boom of guns, the clanking of equipment, sharp orders, and hurrying feet across the stubble. The skyline of the meadow and orchard in the offing is crowned with little figures in grey darting hither and thither. A rattle of musketry; some sleepers will sleep on for ever. The Battalion retires. From a window high up in the farm-house a machine-gun spits out its withering fire upon the hordes rushing like grey rats through the orchard.

A cloud of pink dust: the window has disappeared, but from its ruins emerges a little man, coated white as a miller and bearing on his shoulders a Maxim gun and tripod. He is pursued, dragging his way across the stubble field. The enemy is upon him; but as he reaches the little pond beside the church he hurls his precious burden into it, and thus defeats his enemy.

Four years afterwards this same little man, Kiddie, aged as a yew tree and tenacious as its roots, stood up and gazed through the gateway of the courtyard, across the fields to where Le Cateau's spires were silhouetted against the sky. For this day he had not waited in vain; and except that we had changed our role with that of the enemy, we now the pursuit, they the retreat, the action was identical.

We were thrusting the enemy to his final line.

For the passage of the wood one road only was available for transport, and this had been at many points already destroyed by mines and rendered impassable. It was impossible for the Infantry to pass through the greater portion of the wood owing to the heavy undergrowth; whilst the clearings in the centre

of the forest afforded excellent barriers of defence for the enemy. The bridges over the Sambre River, with the exception of one, had also been blown up by the enemy. It was decided at the outset, in order to avoid the probable heavy gas bombardment of the forest, that the whole of the Machine-Gun Battalion with its transport should follow immediately in the wake of the leading Infantry Battalion of the leading Brigade ; and, in this position, should advance at least as far as the eastern edge of the Forêt de Mormal. This bold plan of advance, which it is probable had never been entertained by any other similar Unit, and might have been regarded as foolhardy, as will be seen, proved to have been mostly wisely decided upon.

In the preceding May I had asked for the services of my twin brother as Transport Officer of the Battalion. He had come home from Buenos Aires and had gone over the top a few times with the 2nd Hampshire Regiment. But "Giglamps," owing to a stigmatism, could never have qualified as an efficient infantry leader. So accidentally he found himself in the A.S.C. train of the 19th Division. He knew all about horses, and was of that temperament to be patient with the vagaries of the mule. I put him in charge of my transport, in its strength of animals and vehicles equal to that of a whole brigade and more.

In our passage through the forest, I elected to drive my transport ahead of the Battalion on the tactical grounds that, if attacked, the gunners could come to the transport and thus get into action, whereas with only a single road, if the transport followed we should never be able to get them into action. My twin protested. I was quite cold-blooded in my suggestion. If what I had considered possible did in fact happen, the animals would be slaughtered in their traces. My brother would not stand for that. He refused. I said to him, "Are you speaking to me as a twin brother or as a junior officer?"

With greater speed than is his custom he snapped, "As a junior officer."

I placed him under arrest. Then I telephoned to General Pinney to tell him what I had done.

Before we went into action, both my brother and I dined with the Divisional Commander. We both went into action together, but my transport, with a patrol screen of the 1st Middlesex, led the Division through the wood. And my twin was awarded the Military Cross.

On the 3rd November we assaulted. The Middlesex did great

work with the bayonet. In Hecq and on the edge of the forest there were rows and rows of enemy dead piled behind fallen tree-trunks, bayoneted. In the road itself there were enormous craters which had been blown and immense obstacles formed by felled trees across the road. I sent forward my spare horses with traces and cleared the road ahead. Then we came to the village of Locquignol. My band with its instruments was marching in the rear of the Battalion.

As we entered the main street of the village it was deserted. But the band struck up "*La Marseillaise*." Heads appeared at the windows, at first timidly and shyly, then old men, women, and children ran out into the streets. They must have been waiting for our advance for a woman ran out with a garland of flowers and placed it round my neck. I felt rather foolish, for they cheered and wept and kissed my old trench boots as I rode down the main street.

Then we passed on, still through the forest, until we came to the line of the River Sambre. The Germans were sitting tight on the high ground on its eastern bank, after destroying the only bridge.

The report written by Captain F. C. Booth, V.C., D.C.M., commanding the leading Company of the Middlesex, states: "The advance through Forêt de Mormal during the early part of the 4th instant had been very rapid and the Machine-Gun Corps in this action proved that their system of transport was so efficient that notwithstanding the fact that the Infantry had advanced almost as quickly as men could march, when the out-post line was checked and held up near the river bank, the machine-guns came into action immediately. It is doubtful whether, under the old system of fighting, the machine-guns with the Infantry Battalion, this could have been achieved. . . . The whole of the Machine-Gun Battalion was in action on the enemy trenches early; and they kept up such an accurate fire that the Infantry were able to choose their spot for building the bridge, and even to dump a large portion of the material required near the spot, that at dusk we were able to push our first bridge across the river which was unfordable, and establish a crossing. . . . The action was a great success and casualties were practically nil. The 33rd Battalion Machine-Gun Corps worked splendidly throughout these operations, thoroughly upholding the traditions of the British Army and adding another glorious victory to their splendid record,

"Their Commanding Officer should be a very proud man."

And he was.

After crossing the river we swept on towards Petit Maubeuge. During this action, my leg had troubled me greatly, so much so that I found myself unable to walk without the use of crutches. These were carried by Bill Clegg riding my second horse ; but I was able to conduct the command, necessitating rapid movement, chiefly on horseback, though on the Sambre I spent hours dragging myself up and down the river bank on crutches.

With my Adjutant, as at Meteren, we were far ahead of the Division, making a reconnaissance, when on the last day of the War, we came again suddenly under heavy machine-gun fire. There were no friendly furrows in which to hide and wriggle so we rode like blazes, with heads bowed over our horses' necks, and brought a half-company into action.

That was my last battle, and sometimes looking back on it, I have regretted that the German machine-gunners made such bad shooting on that day. The action which followed was not well planned and that half-company on that last day, the 9th November, suffered very heavily.

Early on the 10th it was strongly rumoured that the enemy had sent over plenipotentiaries to Maréchal Foch pleading for an armistice. This was officially confirmed at twelve noon. It was stated that the Maréchal had agreed to an armistice under very severe conditions to the enemy, and that Germany must accept or continue the fighting by twelve noon on the 11th. The excitement, both among the British soldiers and the French civilians, was intense.

I opened an immense one-franc sweepstake on the result ; and a deserted shop was taken over for this purpose. I placed in charge of the proceedings one of my Company Commanders, Major MacLoughlin, a man well versed in the conduct of such proceedings. He had been in his earlier life a professional backer, a tipster, a bookmaker, and even for a while had earned a living telling fortunes as " Madame Asia " on Blackpool beach. I never met any man with more energy or a more fertile imagination and of so versatile a mind. Subscriptions poured in, while " Mac " stood in his shop window and bellowed the odds to thousands of admirers both from my own Division and from the Welsh who were waiting in the town. Shortly before eleven o'clock on the 11th, it was announced that the Germans had

accepted the terms, and over 15,000 francs was paid out to a man with the happy name of Diamond in my own battalion.

I turned out the band in full war paint, and preceded by a peal of bells it marched through the streets of the town playing Kenneth Alford's great military marches, and ending in the square with "La Marseillaise" and the National Anthem.

An enormous crowd of soldiers and civilians thronged the streets cheering and waving flags, whilst the Maire of the town presented a bouquet of flowers to the bandmaster and again my neck was publicly decorated with a garland of chrysanthemums, which I wore throughout the day.

I was determined that this day should be a memorable one, so I set my Pioneers to work at a moment's notice ; and at seven o'clock in the evening, forty twelve-foot poles had been prepared, carrying torches at their ends. Headed by the band we marched to the square, where were gathered thousands of men and civilians from every Division in the neighbourhood. I had taken possession of the former German Officers' Club, which faced the square, and had erected a stage thrown out from its lower windows. In front of this I had built an immense bonfire, and added to its excitement by filling it with unused rockets and light signals.

At seven I invited the Maire to light the bonfire. The flames lit the sky for miles around, while the rockets went off like a battery of artillery in action. So terrific was the din, that Staff Officers from several Divisional Headquarters came tearing into the town by motor car to discover whether we had started the War over again on our own ; and they were not perfectly reassured when they saw hundreds of Verey lights soaring up into the sky from the middle of an immense fire whose heat was so terrific that it scorched the fronts of the houses looking down on the square. When the furnace had subsided to a glowing mass my concert commenced.

I possess only a clear recollection of the Overture. There were so many healths to be drunk, so much goodwill to be expressed, and apparently such an unlimited amount of liquor in which to do it, though heaven knows where it came from, that the concert proceeded with glorious hilarity. I sang a duet with Dean, at least I believe I sang, but it may only have been a duologue. Its sequel was that I found myself in the arms of a drummer in the middle of the band below the stage, so that I imagine that during the delivery of my turn I must have fallen

from the stage into the orchestra. If I did so, history was merely repeating itself, for as Bassanio, trick cyclist, in my burlesque of *The Merchant of Venice* in India, I had cycled giddily into the orchestra and found my hind quarters in a timpany.

On the 10th December, in pouring rain, sleet and snow, we marched back through Beaumetz and Pozières, now only recognizable by sign-boards ; Le Butte de Warlencourt and Albert, through Amiens and my beloved Picquigny to Bezencourt. A week's forced march on short rations and nights spent in the open without cover of any kind. Now that our lives were no longer required, those responsible for morale and comfort seemed to have forgotten that soldiers even existed. I recollect no more bitter experience than that march across the scene of our losses and victories in December 1918.

I prepared for Christmas. Not an officer or man in my battalion went without a present from his Commanding Officer, cigarette-cases, leather wallets, things of durability and utility ; and I sent an officer to Paris, well laden with money with which to buy presents for the children in all the surrounding villages. On Christmas morning, attired in a red curtain deftly sewn by the Battalion tailor, with a flowing beard of whitewashed tow, and a top hat, mounted in the centre of a vast German wagon and drawn by sixty-four mules, I commenced my tour of the villages, a goodly part of the band installed as an orchestra in the back of the wagon. An immense fir tree had been strutted into the cart and this was decorated. The children were brought forward by their parents, most of them timidly, for they had never experienced Père Noel and they gave stirrup cups to the drivers and beakers of wine to Father Christmas. We returned to Battalion Headquarters after our mission as a chariot race, mules lathered white, postilions rolling in their saddles, and Father Christmas, hatless, with a threadbare beard tottering in the middle of the cart.

And before he left us, the Battalion was inspected by our well-loved Divisional Commander. As for him his character stands out. His cheerfulness and courage and great sense of proportion ; his decision, his tireless systemization ; and his great spirit. He was a soldier's general. No château could tempt him, no security decoy him ; where the men were, there he was ; how they lived, so did he. As temperate in his living as he was in tempering justice with mercy, as stern as he was kind, he could win a battle in the morning and help Belgian



THE PLACE AND GOTHIC CATHEDRAL AT CORBIE, A FAVOURITE
BILLETING CENTRE JUST WEST OF THE BATTLEFIELD

Remembered by all who fought in the Battle of the Somme. A few weeks
subsequent to this sketch by the author the Cathedral was destroyed by German
gun-fire.

farmers stack their corn in the evening. He came not of a race of courtiers, nor had his way been made smooth by wealth. He won his position by sheer hard work—he passed into the Staff College at the age of twenty-five. His stock was that of the yeomen of England, his forefathers farmers and squires of the Dorset downs, whence he acquired his birthright—his rugged frame, his unwearying patience ; his kindliness, trained by his military life to a sure sense of justice ; his eye for country—one of the greatest military gifts ; and his love for his fellow-men and for horses. Prior to the War he had had ample experience both as a Regimental and as a Staff Officer. He had commanded his own battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, of which he made not only fine soldiers but fine cricketers. He had tasted of war in South Africa. And he had never ceased to profit from his varied experience of military life and of men.

Tireless, his set face ever ready to break into a smile of encouragement when his quick eye saw it was needed, he was everywhere—yet nowhere was he absent. He had the great gift of generalship ; he was the right force in the right place at the right moment ; his honour was our honour ; his name our name ; his disappointments ours, and his victories ours. His K.C.B. came late, so that we could honour it the more ; the true knight whose spurs indeed were won in battle.

Spare and straight in workmanlike kit—no spit and polish in the field ; nothing unnecessary, but stripped as an ironclad for action ; typical of his race, his firm mouth set and his keen eyes lit with just the smile and light that the sight of a friend a long way off will bring.

Who can tell the burden that must weigh at times on the mind of a General of Division as he returns from the slaughter of his men, when he loves those men ? Yet, the light of optimism lest the living should be depressed—the look of Victory when the heart was heaviest !

Among fighters one beacon burns the brightest, a man whose qualities of leadership, military genius, and high courage make of him, for me, the greatest tactical leader produced in the Great War. I served under his command and in intimate association with him later, always in the same Division, from June 1916 until after the Armistice. This man was Alexander Walter Frederic Baird. He commanded the 100th Infantry Brigade without interruption during this period. As a regular soldier he made his profession the business of his life. Although he might,

through influence of political association, very readily have found ease in a château, and have climbed high in rank by toadying to the courtiers among soldiers far from the fighting line, he dedicated his life to the Brigade which he commanded. He was jealous of its efficiency and of interference with his command, whether in tactical operations, or in its interior economy.

Eager, keen-witted, a man of masterly brain, he was impatient of inefficiency, whether on the part of superiors or juniors. Those, and they were many on the staffs of Corps and Armies, who were incapable of appreciating a military situation, as he observed it always by personal reconnaissance, feared him. And because they were afraid, they saw to it that this man, who might well have led an army, should have his wings clipped to the leadership of a brigade.

Often was his heart heavy when he watched a brigade of high fighting quality, perfectly trained by himself, thrown away, time after time, by the ignorant and futile orders of a higher command. From the high road in Bazentin he saw battalions who constituted the flower of the Army, 1st Queen's, 2nd Worcesters, Glasgow Highlanders, perish upon uncut wire, their ranks decimated by enfilade machine-gun fire. Baird had foretold that this could be the only result from such a tactical operation, a frontal attack across an open valley against an entrenched line, well covered with thick wire uncut by artillery, lying on the forward slope of a dominating hill in full daylight.

Again, Baird, with whom I conducted a personal reconnaissance, recognized immediately that it was courting suicide to attempt a frontal attack upon the line of machine-gun nests which lay in echelon running vertically from our own posts in the Hindenburg Line back to the Canal de St. Quentin. This was on the 30th September, 1918. He not only made his protest, but visited the headquarters of the Corps which had ordered the forthcoming operation. Here, with that completeness of detail which characterized everything he did, he demonstrated how he could move his brigade to the southern flank, there concentrate it ; and then, by a series of leaps, assault post after post and each hill-top, while each post was kept under concentrated shell-fire. It is quite certain that had he been permitted to carry out the assault in this way the losses of the Brigade would have been entirely trivial. The machine-guns in echelon would have been masked by the intervening hills. His plan was summarily

rejected by those who had never even seen the ground on the monstrous and selfish argument, as Baird told me himself, that "The Corps must be furthest east." So to satisfy that conceit three battalions, the Glasgow Highlanders, 2nd Worcesters, 1st Queen's, went over the top at dawn and perished in regular lines, platoon after platoon, headed by their lieutenants, company after company led by their captains, until the Targelle Valley became a shambles. And Baird, watching from beside Meath Post, at whose side I stood, leaning on my crutches, wept and cursed.

He was a master linguist. I saw him in a dugout in the cemetery at Croisilles after the successful first attack on the Hindenburg Line in May 1917 interrogating German prisoners and redispersing reinforcements and his brigade to meet the point from which counter-attack was most certain from the evidence of prisoners. For the successful raid opposite Bouchavesnes on the Somme, in January 1917, upon the line occupied by the 3rd Guard Grenadier Regiment, Baird, leaving his command-post, came up to the front line. And as prisoners were brought in he searched their minds, speaking swiftly to them in German, until in a few short minutes he had elucidated the position of the most important points in their lines. Then, on the instant, he sent over a further raiding party, which captured not only many prisoners and machine-guns, but completed the havoc of the German line at this point.

At Rancourt, in December 1916, when we took over from the French, whose corpses lay thick on the ground, and the enemy observing this movement attempted a counter-attack upon the relief, Baird personally took command of both British and French soldiers and led them to the repulse of this intrusion.

He never asked a question of any subaltern in the line the answer to which he did not himself know from his own personal observation. He never ordered troops to attack where he feared to go himself. In the horror of Les Bœufs, from the stinking mud of which the fallen cried until death claimed them, into whose sinister shell-holes men went and never came back, Baird walked at night surveying his defences, calculating the possibilities of successful assault across the morass to Le Transloy. He took me with him, and fear clutched at my heart. Division after division, even the Guards had failed to make good an advance. But this was characteristic. Where other brigades had failed, Baird's brigade was entrusted with the final mission.

And to the capture of a trench known as Brimstone, Baird sent forward a company of Worcesters under Lieutenant Bennett and four of my machine-gun crews. It was Baird's own reconnaissance which made that attack successful ; and Bennett was awarded the Victoria Cross. But how modest a man was Baird ! When he filled the gap behind Bailleul, and there was no one else to fill it, during the great German onslaught in April 1918, no one sang the praises of the General.

The Worcesters, whom he both trained and maintained in all their matchless quality, held the church of the Neuve Eglise against assault after assault. And it was Baird who with such diligent care, from his thinning brigade, sent platoon after platoon, machine-gun after machine-gun, to give strength to the pivot of the defence, and to harry the attack in its flanks. Always he showed the military skill of a man of unquenchable courage and girt with indomitable determination.

But if he was impatient of inefficiency, his anger roused by the querulous intrusions of uninstructed authority, he was possessed also of profound human kindness. His men knew that in the hour of difficulty and of danger, among them they would find beneath a tin hat at a rakish angle the smiling blue eyes and bristling red moustache of their general, a word of encouragement for the failing, a touch of infinite tenderness for the wounded, the smile and inspiring message of a man who knew not the word "defeat." The 100th Brigade was welded in its general. Indestructable cohesion, the highest of all qualities which an armed body can possess, is based not alone on hereditary resolution, that of the tradition of Queen's, Worcesters, or H.L.I., but upon mutual confidence and respect. Every man among the thousands who passed through the ranks of the 100th Brigade during two years of battle following battle, knew his general. For him there was not one who had not the respect which his quality demanded, not one who in his general did not place the confidence of all his life. When one remembers the brazen, the fussy, the querulous, the inefficient, the unwilling, the inhuman generals who commanded British troops, we, who served under him, may rejoice that we were privileged to have our lives influenced by one of such courage, equalled only by its tenderness, and to be led by a man of never overtried military genius.

And though we may weep because of his tragic end, we may rejoice that he has been gathered among the good comrades

whose life and happiness he safeguarded more carefully than his own.

They say that trumpets blow in Heaven when some new soul joins its throng, and that the angels always harp. I can believe that when Walter Baird made his entry ten thousand trumpets blew his welcome and men claimed his leadership. And I like to think that in that welcome from so many who have passed over, as it were in one day, the fingers of angels rested on their chords to mark the entry into Heaven of a captain of men's souls. And I do believe also, that from the petty irritations of this life he was taken to be a better counsellor.

So soon as the Armistice was completed, I decided that I would, both from my own War Diaries and private notes, as well as from memory, compile a record of the fighting experience of the Machine-Gun Units with which I had served. I thought also that such a record should be in the possession of everyone who had served under my command as well as in that of the next of kin of those who had fallen.

While we were resting at Hornoy, awaiting decisions by General Headquarters both as to our destination and fate, with the assistance of my battalion clerical staff, I dictated the history of the Machine-Gun Companies and of the 33rd Battalion of the Machine-Gun Corps. In order to ensure accuracy, I formed an editorial committee of those who had served in the various actions in which we had participated, including those who had been eyewitnesses of the principal events.

The handsome quarto volume published privately in 1919 in a limited edition of sixteen hundred copies, containing over two hundred illustrations from my own sketches and photographs, is not only an historical record of detailed fighting bearing the hall-mark of consistent accuracy, but is also one of the most remarkable war histories ever published. It appeared under an omnibus editorship, "written and illustrated by members of the Battalion."

The Times welcomed the publication as "no mere history of actions and brave deeds. It reflects very truthfully the nature of the British soldier in war . . . the Commanding Officer is a water-colour painter of considerable power."

The Spectator in a review of a column and a half continued: "We regret that we have no space in which to deal with the plain but intensely thrilling tale of hard fighting which Colonel Hutchison records so modestly. He has given us a most readable

book. Its most numerous and admirable illustrations from his own spirited and accurate water-colour sketches complete an invaluable record of the War as this enduring and gallant battalion saw it."

The *Manchester Guardian* recorded that my battalion "has given a fine lead to other disbanded regiments in its production of an historical record and memoir of its war service. Its methods would be hard to better. Colonel Hutchison's vividly painted series of battle sketches."

The *Daily Telegraph*: "This sumptuous volume . . . these pictures supply a strikingly realistic commentary to the letterpress and give a lurid impression of the ardours and endurances of war. The entire collection provides a unique souvenir of the experiences and sufferings of the campaign."

The *Cologne Post* told me that "to have compiled a battalion history from the overture until the curtain fell is a gigantic accomplishment . . . the final message from Colonel Hutchison tucked away at the end of this publication rings true and is an example of the spirit the Great War has found in the sons of Britain."

His Majesty was graciously pleased to accept a copy. In reply, at the hands of Lord Stamfordham, he said :

"The King has received with much pleasure the first copy of *The History and Memoir of the 33rd Battalion Machine-Gun Corps* which you, its Commander, and the other members have been good enough to offer for His Majesty's acceptance.

"The King is indeed glad to possess this interesting and beautifully prepared History of your distinguished Battalion and record of gallant services in almost every part of the British battle area. His Majesty can realize how much the volume will be prized both by those still living, and by the families of their comrades who have fallen."

His Majesty the King of the Belgians wrote to me (I translate from the French) : "The King himself remembers with emotion the different episodes in the life of 'Cette belle troupe' which has defiled before his presence, and this circumstance still further augments the interest which His Majesty attaches to the possession of this volume."

The President of the French Republic was "infinitely touched by this delicate attention" when I sent him a copy. He expressed the view that "with the greatest pleasure he accepted this work of which both the text and the exquisite drawings would conserve

faithfully the memory of the Great War on the part of the Front portrayed."

Lord Haig wrote to me : " It is a record of which you and the officers and men of the Battalion may well be proud " ; and Lord Plumer wrote to me of the beauty of the book and of the fine record which the Battalion had had under his command in the 2nd Army.

But not least am I pleased with the opinions of one or two distinguished German officers to whom I have given copies of this volume. General von Seeckt wrote to me : " I accept the book with deep gratitude and I gladly place it with the accounts of our battles. I assure you that I do not only understand your vivid *Heat of Battle* but I am also in sympathy with it."

Herr Junger, great fighter, a German subaltern, author of *The Storm of Steel*, one which I consider to be the greatest story as sheer reporting emanating from Germany concerning the War, wrote to me : " By sending me the wonderful war story you have given me a pleasure as undeserving as it is great. It delights me to know that during the War and even though on opposite sides we have been so near to each other." He returned to me, " with his sincere affection," another volume of his own, *Feuer und Blut*, and inscribed in it a dedication, which translated reads : " To Colonel G. S. Hutchison, in memory of nights spent under the same sky."

Others to whom I sent spare copies of this volume were Conan Doyle, who during his latter years showed me many kindnesses, who thought it " a remarkable book " ; John Buchan, kind and generous to a fault, who wrote to me : " I spent a very happy evening over it. It is extraordinarily well done and your own sketches are as good as anything I have seen of the kind. No book I have looked at has brought home to me so vividly the atmosphere of the Front."

Sir Ernest Swinton, inventor of the tank, in 1914 Eyewitness, and formerly my instructor at Woolwich, good friend too, wrote to me, " It is a magnificent work."

One evening in 1925 I dined with Dr. Hadyn Guest at the House of Commons. He brought as his other guest Mr. H. G. Wells ; and after dinner we returned to Mr. Wells' flat in Whitehall Court. During dinner and afterwards, Mr. Wells pursued me mercilessly for war facts and impressions, and asked me if I would send to him a copy of my private history. In return for

this he sent me an edition of his works autographed, in the first of which was inscribed also, "after a very pleasant evening."

In the literary career which much later after this excursion into it I adopted, those whom I have mentioned as well as Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson, Worthy Evans, Lord Baden-Powell, Gilbert Frankau, D. H. Lawrence, Gwynne of the *Morning Post*, have ever been kind, generous, and extraordinarily helpful.

My entry upon the stage of war literature engaged me in a prolific correspondence. Apart from a few abusive anonymous writers, obviously conscientious objectors, this correspondence was one which I felt it my duty always to answer.

Among those who wrote, in his own careful handwriting, was the late Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, whose *British Campaigns in Europe 1914-1918* I have praised more than once in reviews. Conan Doyle, on the 24th June, writing a few days before his death, said: "I must thank you for your kind word about my book. I confess it has been a disappointment to me, for I put a lot of work into it—the very best I had . . . yet it is confused with other so-called Histories which have no real research in them, and every now and then some item is mentioned in the Press as a new discovery, which I had written twelve years or so ago. However, all things find their level in time—but not always in *our* time. I also collect war books, and am glad to have your list. Many will be of value some day, for the vast importance of the War is not yet realized. Fifty years hence every detail will be scanned. . . . I hate fine writing about the War. It needs no gloss.

General von Seeckt wrote to me: "I am glad that you agree with me that after an honourable struggle we are able to shake hands together as soldiers. Likewise I deplore and condemn the book *All Quiet on the Western Front* as unfair and one-sided, and I am glad to find that you have a better opinion about our Army and our country." But I may comment, how fine a type of soldier is this German general who commanded the Reichswehr after the War. His writings, especially the book *Gedanken eines Soldaten*, make plain his attitude and philosophy towards those whom he was privileged to command.

Robert Graves, whose service on the Western Front was largely with the 19th Brigade, wrote me pages from his happy retreat in the Balearic Islands. I can wish that he had been so explicit in *Good-bye to all that*. Graves is a hard-hitter, but possessing a

high percentage of Scottish blood in his veins I am convinced that he never intended to impute any lack of traditional heroism to the Scottish battalions. He says, "The Jocks got more than their fair share of credit in the Press, because journalists are often Scots, and because the Press concentrated on attack rather than defence. The English were jealous. . . . I do repeat that animosity against the Jocks was very strong. Yes, again there was a particular anti-Jock feeling in the R.W.F. because the H.L.I. robbed them of the Army Soccer Cup in 1912 (date ?) by fluking a goal, and then deliberately kicking into touch all the rest of the game. Good tactics, but infuriating."

Old soldiers recognize the football cry "H.L.I.!" but few can interpret the historical allusion. Unless a senior officer, some fanatic anti-Jock, fostered such animosity, since certainly 99 per cent of the rank and file of the 2nd R.W.F. can never have heard the cry "H.L.I.!" I cannot believe that it influenced the Battalion against soldiers recruited from the Lowlands of Scotland. I do not know the Welch. Perhaps they are unduly susceptible. It is the fact, however, that the brigadier, Mayne, had been an officer of the H.L.I.

Writing of my Machine-Gun History, Graves says, "What an imposing affair! The documentation is very good, and if the King was pleased, well, he had a right to be! Your loyalty was beyond reproach to the very end. I cannot see how on earth you didn't throw my book in the fire after writing one like that yourself. It is so much better as history than mine, because of its very reserve, and its simple faith in war as war. I mean this. . . . I have really got rid of it. In Majorca. No war here since Saracen times (1229, the last battle): I think that's right. You'll know."

And there was a letter from D. H. Lawrence, who found "the spirit of the book friendly and human." There were congratulations from Field-Marshal Sir George Milne; Lord Riddell, always enthusiastically kind; from my old colleague Sydney Walton, again ever ready to help; from Gilbert Frankau, and from "Sapper."

My letters to *The Times* brought me a full post-bag for many days. Expressions of thanks from widows, and from mothers who had lost their sons, and not least from civilians who had put on uniform in defence of their country. Again I am bound to express surprise that scarcely one retired officer, long inured to the traditions of the Army, came forward in defence of cherished

ideals and standards of military conduct. I may ask, "Is Henderson's *Science of War* forgotten as a textbook?"

And I have received, also, magnificent letters from Australia, America, Canada, and New Zealand, from ex-enemies in Germany, and many from France.

But often how querulous has been official Germany, expecting, as it would seem to me, that those who suffered most, although prepared to forgive and forget, should, even so, override truth in the narration of history.

CHAPTER XVI

DEMOBBED

Army education—The Rouen theatre—An unpleasant general—Mutiny—A summary of war literature—Defence of the character and honour of soldiers in France.

EARLY in January "The Powers-that-were" decided that my battalion could be fruitfully employed in guarding German prisoners at Rouen. My Quartermaster had fallen sick and the same "Powers-that-were" sent to me a drunken stiff to take over these duties. I could do nothing but abide the fellow. Agitated by the politicians at home who had in view a general election and were seeking to curry favour with millions of men and their families seeking demobilization, the Staffs at the Base began to bombard Battalion Commanders with those orders and counter-orders which end in disorder.

I was to start immediately to have men instructed in shorthand and typewriting, in commercial practice, in art, literature, and science; and Educational Officers were appointed to arrange a curriculum. As we were on the line of march from Bezencourt to Rouen, I sent for my senior N.C.O.s to have a little conference on the matter. One of them, possessing a D.C.M. and M.M., told me barefacedly that he was not going back to school. All he wanted was to be demobilized. He said he was a poultry farmer. That was his job by day. As a matter of fact he was a burglar, and that was his job by night.

At any rate, in conformity with the instructions issued, my fighting Unit was redispensed in its Sections to correspond with the standards of an elementary school, of which I was the head master, and each company, in conformity with the public-school idea, became, so to speak, a house and each Company Commander a house-master.

And then we went on walking towards Rouen without any further disturbance from the Staff. But I found my Quartermaster so horribly and so publicly drunk that I was obliged to

place him under arrest. As his form of drunkenness produced physical violence I locked him up in a cow-shed and placed sentries with fixed bayonets on the door. When the man was sober he wept alcoholic tears and pleaded for his wife and three children somewhere in the North of England. While I was agitating how to get rid of this person with the least possible annoyance and disgrace to my battalion, fresh instructions were received ; and this time no one seemed to care about the schools, but the order was to demobilize old soldiers and men in " key civilian positions," by return of post. But before I had time to analyse whether poultry farming allied with burglary was a key industry, or whether John Smith who had done a week as a trimmer in a coal-mine could be classified as a hewer of coal, a peremptory and special order was received for the immediate release of Private Snowden as a key industrial worker.

I knew Snowden. He was just eighteen, one of my Scouts. For a few months he had washed bottles for a professor in a laboratory at Cambridge University. Bottle-washing was therefore the industry of greatest national importance. This I realized at once, and accordingly commenced demobilization on this principle. Both the burglar and the bottle-washer went home with the first draft, and good luck to them ! With the exception of the Sergeant-Major all my tried non-commissioned officers were removed by a stroke of the pen ; and I marched into Rouen, a veteran in charge of a weary school treat, amid the wild excitement of the populace.

My Assistant Adjutant, MacLoughlin, had ridden one day ahead ; and characteristic of him he had warned all the newspapers that " the most famous band on God's earth would parade in the streets " ; and we were the first fighting battalion to reach this old Norman cathedral city. We marched down the Rue Jeanne d'Arc holding up the traffic and upsetting the horses, while those khaki figures who had hibernated in the cafés of this salubrious spot knew not whence we came or who we were.

But the military authorities did not provide for our comfortable reception. We followed the river to some mud flats on the outskirts of the town, well removed from any of its pleasures ; and we marched into a narrow area surrounded on its four sides by high barbed wire, containing, as fitted such lusty troops, a parade-ground thirty feet by twenty, twelve Niesen huts without a single bed in any one of them, and the floors of which were strewn with

refuse and in many places covered with dung. On my inquiry I learnt that during that morning it had been vacated by a company of the Chinese Labour Corps, and very suitably, since the Chinese were our Allies, we took over from them as we had done from the French in the battle of the Somme and at Ypres. But was there not an Army order which commanded that we describe the Portuguese as "our noble allies" and not as Pork and Beans or Bloody Geese?

A Staff Officer appeared in the afternoon, a beautiful person. He brought documents. These were the duties, the carrying out of which was entrusted to my battalion. We were to furnish guards over German prisoners in various parts of Rouen, the farthest guard of half a company being seven miles from my camp. I pointed out to him, after examining the documents, that the strength of the Battalion was only sufficiently large for me to be able to supply alternate guards on a daily roster.

Before his arrival I had observed on the other side of a wire on one side of the camp that there were German prisoners. On the second side, of course, was a road, and across it a further camp of German prisoners. On the third side was the river, black and murky, and on the fourth a glue factory. The stench of the camp was absolutely nauseating, but I did not discover whether this was due to the glue factory or to two years of Chinese occupation.

I went across the road to introduce myself to the officer in charge of the German prisoners' camp. I was met at the gate of the camp by a most charming and soldierly gentleman, a German feldwebel. We exchanged courtesies in the German tongue and my new friend appeared both delighted and impressed at the appearance of the fighting troops, especially when he heard that they were men of the Machine-Gun Corps. Apparently we had registered well upon his earlier memory of the War. The prisoners were at luncheon, hot roast beef and vegetables. The huts in which they lived were beautifully equipped with beds, blankets, and in many cases sheets. Pyjamas were laid out: and there were musical instruments and games, and after luncheon the prisoners brought out a football which they kicked about on a ground almost as large as the Oval.

But we had come from the war area. We were well soaked in discomfort, so settled down to make the best of a bad job. I sent my band on Sunday to the Square and rendered a programme of music. I engaged the Théâtre des Arts, a noble

edifice, the largest place of entertainment in this city, and arranged a programme, both vocal and instrumental, so as to remove from the city any feeling that these fighting troops were bringing to it a savage spirit, for rumour suggested that it was possessed by fighting troops.

The ubiquitous MacLoughlin had made a journey to Paris, and from this fair city brought back with him a human nightingale. He told me that this great artiste had been persuaded to accompany him by the arts of his tongue alone. He knew of her triumph in London, how beautiful she was, and her beautiful voice, and, furthermore, he had on his bended knee begged the honour of playing just one song for her on the piano—" *et tout de suite, moi j'étais captivée,*" as she told me—and here she was. Voilà !

I laid down good money to pay for the theatre, but its proprietor demanded a written permission from the Authorities ; and since I could not bring him to believe that the War was over, at least that part of it, namely red-tape, which affected him, I took possession of the theatre, an act of vandalism which he suffered very gladly.

When the doors opened a seething mass of ladies struggled for entry. One of the few things I have never experienced in life is to be present in a departmental store on the day of a bargain sale. But fighting men, so long removed from the society of ladies, were an irresistible attraction to the virgins and spouses of Rouen. The Commanding Officer's box was crowded. I did not inquire whose wife was there, but I was terribly embarrassed : even more so later in the evening, for after her triumph on the stage it fell to my duty to have to entertain the *prima donna*, and she immediately succumbed in my presence. A strong arm did not come to the rescue. I sent a waiter for a bottle of champagne. When we got her back on the stage after the interval, it required all the persuasive powers of MacLoughlin to remove her, and this was not accomplished until the curtain had been firmly lowered and MacLoughlin had borne her off in his arms. Other days, other ways.

I still suffered the inconvenience of my Quartermaster, and persuaded the G.O.C. to release him from arrest on the plea of a lapse. Armed with the authority to demobilize, and provided with the necessary principles of selection, I decided that if a bottle-washer could be sent to England to re-engage in civilian life, it was only proper that a publican, for such my Quarter-

master was before he studied the science of war, could be sent home to his bottles. I was preparing to send him to the bosom of his wife and family, and to the bottles, when he elected within the mess of those guarding German prisoners again to "throw a horrible drunk." He was placed under arrest and sent back again to my care. It was two days before he was sober, and he spent these in what had formerly been a Chinese latrine. When he reappeared, I considered the best possible manner in which to deal with him, having regard to the numerous instructions which I had received, and the fact that I still desired to retain for my battalion its most honourable record, was to pack the fellow home. I demobilized him. I hope, since he caused me unmitigated anxiety, that he has made his pub a paying proposition, so that the wife and children for whom he professed so much affection have been kept from starvation's door.

But though I had demobilized the Quartermaster I had not heard the last of the case.

There appeared one day at the door of the shanty, which I occupied as an Orderly Room, a general. I had never seen him before. He informed me that I was under his command. He was with me for twenty minutes. A day or two before his arrival I had been instructed to hand the whole of my machine-gun transport and equipment, with the exception of the rifles on strength, into store. Although these were taken out of my hands they were still under my charge. Machine-gunners were therefore without arms, and intermixed with demobilization, which occurred in spurts as authority felt it could grapple with the problem, I was continuing a pretence of providing higher education, while nearly all the men were alternatively on twenty-four-hour guard or sleeping off its effects for a further twenty-four hours. I had also made protests, couched in more vigorous language as time went on, suggesting that beds be provided or alternatively material from which to make them, that it would be nice to have somewhere for recreation, and that although a fortnight had elapsed since we arrived in Rouen no one had had a bath. There was no hot water, nothing to heat it in except teapots, and most of the cold water of the camp, at any rate, did not flow because the pipes were frost-bound. The retort to my protest was a note from the General Staff of the city that they had observed that my men did not salute well in the streets, and that, therefore, for two hours daily the Battalion was to be engaged in disciplinary marching drill with fixed bayonets. My

experience of generals being almost alone confined to the charming and humane personalities of Pinney, Baird, and Mayne, with an occasional glimpse of "Father Plumer," I was innocent enough not to connect the visit of a strange general with a protest which I had made. But the mills of G.H.Q. grind as slowly and as surely as those of God himself. Having survived shell-fire and bullets, they were quite determined that this ill-starred creature, now Colonel, Hutchison, should be sacrificed to fulfil their own lust for getting back from the safe refuge of the anonymous report.

I learnt in a letter communicated to me that this strange general "had thoroughly inspected the Battalion." He "found it inefficient in every respect. Orders had not been complied with"; and lastly and most reprehensible of all Colonel Hutchison had shown that "he is not possessed of those qualities necessary to successful leadership," because, forsooth, he had packed home a drunken Quartermaster, whose occupation was that of a publican and whose proper place was in the pub.

Further, I was charged with some offence, I have forgotten precisely what, but they always say that "they" can do anything they wish in the Army "except put you in a family way," so I was placed in open arrest and relieved of my command, and reduced vocally by the strange general to the rank of Captain! It may be remarked that this general had never inspected the Battalion, for the whole of its guns and equipment were in store. He had never seen the men, for half of them were on guard and the other half asleep in their huts. But it is true that I point-blank refused to permit another general to be treated privately by the Medical Officer of my battalion for venereal disease.

By this time, owing to the chaos of orders emanating from the Base, the inhuman conditions prevailing owing to the authority of "brass hats" who had never seen a shot fired, there was already a serious mutiny in Rouen, while throughout the Army, owing alone to interference by heartless and class-conscious Staff Officers of the Regular Army, regiments and formations of fine tradition and discipline were reduced in many cases to mobs of disgruntled, disappointed, mutinous men. Each night there were scenes of riot and of hooliganism, even cases of violent assault and murder.

My own battalion was untroubled by this mutiny. But when they learnt that I had been placed under arrest the Company Sergeant-Majors, well decorated and with long service, together

with every single man in the Battalion refused to go on parade, while a committee was formed of the rank and file to maintain the administration of the Battalion, and they signed a round robin transmitted to the G.O.C. refusing to accept any order other than my own.

A new C.O., a regular officer, with no fighting experience, and four years my junior, appeared to take over command. I gave him every facility. No one would accept his orders, while my officers sat in sullen silence in the mess. The strange general reappeared and ordered me to command my battalion on parade. This I refused, unless he placed the order in writing and liberated me from arrest. This he did. Within five minutes the Battalion was correctly on parade. The strange general then employed honeyed words, not revealing to the troops that he had in his pocket an order to send me home to my Depot pending further instructions, and that I was to have administered to me a severe reprimand without court martial, the privilege of which was denied to me. It was a trick, a dirty trick.

The following day I was summoned by the G.O.C., who took advantage of the provisions of the new Army Act just passed through Parliament, and administered to me a severe reprimand. As I have been first in many things so I was the first recipient of this new honour designed expressly to break those who had served their country well in fighting, in order to make room for others who had skulked at the Base.

I reported home to the Director of Personal Services. Very sympathetic he was too. The Assistant Military Secretary, Mayne, who had commanded the 19th Brigade, also expressed in writing every sympathy with my case. My old generals supported me. I appealed under Section 42 of the Army Act to His Majesty the King. The same tribunal which has committed itself to injustice reports thereon with the familiar formula that "His Majesty has given . . . and regrets," and so on and so forth.

They smote me on the 12th April, Meteren day, no more appropriate date. I was ordered to my Depot at Stirling, to which I was committed with the rank of Captain. I applied for leave. I was utterly dismayed and heart-broken at being thus separated from those with whom I had served in the field almost continually from 1914 until the end of the campaign. But I pursued my protest, and would have pursued it to the end. Months later, in September, I received a copy of a letter written

by the strange general to the War Office, a miserable, mealy-mouthed, lame apology. I reproduce it hereunder in full :

“ In reference to 33rd Division letter A.C./36/430, dated 27/4/19, to the Assistant Military Secretary lines of communication :

“ 1. I believe that my words as to the capacity for the ‘ successful leadership ’ of Lieut.-Colonel Hutchison are liable to misinterpretation. This officer undoubtedly showed great powers of leadership in the field, as is shown by the numerous testimonials to that effect from general officers under whom he has served. I wish to qualify my remark as to Lieut.-Colonel Hutchison’s leadership by saying that I do not think his experience was conducive to his being a successful administrator under peace conditions.

“ 2. The above is what I should have said in my original recommendation. At the time when I made this recommendation the majority of the Units of the 33rd Division were not in a good state of organization, due to extensive demobilization and to the arrival of drafts from many different Units outside the Division. The Policy concerning the employment of the Division, which you will remember was one of those sent to the lines of communication, was not very definite ; but one thing I clearly understood was that we were liable to be sent to some sphere of active operations at very short notice. Under the circumstances I felt as I do now that I had no option but to remove Lieut.-Colonel Hutchison from his Command. In my letter I recommended that he should be given a further chance by being placed as second-in-command of some other battalion. In no way did I intend that any disgrace should be attached to Lieut.-Colonel Hutchison, who, though he possessed the soldierly qualities necessary to successful leading in action, undoubtedly lacked the experience necessary to successful demonstration in peace.

“ 3. In reference to Lieut.-Colonel Hutchison’s action with regard to the Quartermaster this case occurred before I joined the Division and I submit bears out my remarks about lack of experience.

“ 4. I should like to put in an earnest plea that in recognition of Lieut.-Colonel Hutchison’s gallant and successful leadership in the field, and in view of the totally altered conditions which now apply, his removal from the Command of the Regiment should be cancelled and that he should be permitted to retire

or be demobilized with the rank of Lieut.-Colonel, which rank he undoubtedly earned by his conduct in the field."

The comment of any man with common sense on this document is that it was wrung from its author by pressure and therefore lacks sincerity ; that if the strange general clearly understood, as he states, that the Battalion was to be sent to some other sphere of active operations at very short notice, then it is surprising indeed that the officer commanding, myself, was never informed of this, that the whole of his guns and equipment were taken away to fall into rust and disuse, and that the strange general himself ordered me to devote the Battalion's attention to shorthand and typewriting. His letter is, too, a fine compliment to the leadership of Sir Reginald Pinney and Brigadier-General Baird, my Divisional and Brigade Commanders respectively ! The strange general is now dead. R.I.P. But I remember that I fared better than poor General Barter.

The severe reprimand was never withdrawn : the War Office with supreme generosity permitted me to retire with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, to which, incidentally, every temporary officer was entitled, while offering me no further military employment. And some months later I received a letter ordering me to refund the pay which I had drawn between the date of my deposition as a Lieutenant-Colonel and that of my final resignation under pressure. Since I was in no financial position to do this, having spent the money, I refused ; and the War Office, characteristic of its pluck, engaged the services of the Treasury Solicitor, in the same manner as many of the Staff had employed half-baked boys to do their dirty work in March and April 1918, with the object of putting a barrage down on me from the safe battery position of a Government Department in Whitehall. By this date I was busy with other things, interested in my fellow-men and in affairs beyond the horizon and mental capacity of the helmeted limpets in Whitehall, and I returned the money to the Treasury Solicitor. So that those who from 1914 had pursued me because I refused either to share their class consciousness, or to bend before their bullying, were successful in blackmailing me to the end. They got the cash, but not my soul !

They have no conscience, so these lines will not hurt, but as mine was by no means a unique case, it seems to me a proper duty that it should be recorded so that if we are afflicted with

another war requiring citizen service, those who partake in it will know quite well in advance that, if they dare to be humane and prefer to share the little comforts which the usages of war provide for fighting troops with those inferior in the military scale, then if they are unlucky enough not to be killed, they will be hounded to the deepest depths of human misery.

But I know this, that such dirty work did not break a comradeship founded on the battlefield.

I venture the opinion that those who have read the preceding chapters will agree that my claim to know something of war and of its usages, and especially to be familiar with the characteristics of the British soldier on the Western Front, is not to be denied.

The years after the War have seen pour from the presses and from publishing houses a vast number of books dealing with the Great War. The columns of *The Times* and of other national newspapers have been thrown open to correspondence upon this literature; and because I have been asked more than once to contribute thereon, and moreover have felt impelled to do so, it is of undoubted interest to marshal again in these pages the opinions which I have previously expressed and which I still hold. It must be remembered that during 1929 and 1930, apart from some earlier publications, historical and romantic, there was a wave of eagerness on the part of a world public, assiduously fostered by publishers, to glut itself with war literature. I repeat my summary published in *John o' London's Weekly*.

"Before any writer dares to write, he should remember that human nature at all its points is frail. Men who have suffered the anguish of wounds, the torments of thirst and privation, the horror of bombardment, the bitterness of imprisonment, the gall of disease, the dread of the unknown, who have suffered the shock of being uprooted from the English countryside, and have incurred all the anxiety of domestic disturbance—these are ill-equipped to come under a censorship, nor will they be tolerant of those whose perception cannot pierce the dirt and vulgarity with which war camouflages the abstract virtues, the sum total of which is British character.

"I write with some authority as a soldier, for I served with the Infantry from 1914 till the Armistice. I have lived with Germans both before and since the War, and was always more interested in my profession than in 'poodle-faking'; and in the amusements of private soldiers than in pirouetting before ladies, with

blushing boots and shining spurs, at any of those clubs which are a distinctive feature of official life abroad.

"No true perspective of the Great War, in itself so vast and varied, can be obtained within a narrow field of reading. In what lies truth ; in what mere sensationalism ; what to choose ; where to begin—these problems must indeed be perplexing.

"I possess a library of nearly every book published concerning the Western Front. I say with all the emphasis at my command that most of them contain glaring inaccuracies and are grossly misleading. Some, obviously pandering to sensationalism, have sought to secure for their authors the rich royalties of a best-seller ; others are the neurotic outpourings of people who seem to be at war with themselves and to be offering an apologia in remorse for four years of an ill-spent life.

"War is not a clean business, nor can you make it so by camouflaging it with a literary gloss. It is better otherwise. Nor do I think that, however gruesome may be the tales, war novels will deter men from taking up arms in defence of a threat to exterminate their cultural institutions. Men whose beliefs travel beyond the finality of life on this planet will fight on behalf of those institutions : so that, as propaganda, war novels fail.

"Kipling, abused by some pacifists, succeeded in imbuing me as a youngster in India with a frank admiration for the Afghani—his magnificent physique, courage, resource, and gay humour—and when I hunted with him in his hills, that admiration became affection.

"War literature can be more or less divided into three categories : first, pure fiction, like *Bretherton*, or that parody of modern war, Montague's *Right Off the Map*, both thrilling stories. Second, history and sheer reporting. There are an immense number of these, including regimental and divisional histories, some of which, published privately for subscribers, excel all other works in the simplicity of their narrative, the fidelity of their description ; while, throughout, their reading is proof that British racial character, whether of the town or of the countryside, nobly upheld the traditions of our race. In this category I will select several of those which have been prominently before the public.

"In *Good-bye to all That*, Robert Graves paints a picture which in its war chapters is as truthful and vivid as anything written. Let me commend *Storm of Steel*, by Ernst Junger, a young German

officer who fought on the British front : this is sheer reporting and it gripped me as no other German war story has done. In *It's a Great War* Mary Lee is in a reminiscent mood, but how I struggled through 690 pages of such deadly drivel I do not know. I suppose the author gave them their money's worth in quantity, for the book shared a £5000 prize. Benstead's *Retreat*, a sketch, seems true—I wish it were not—and the author breathes his sincerity through every page : although a work of fiction I decline to believe that it is not also reporting. Under the cowardly title, *God have Mercy on Us*, one Scanlon apparently shares the prize with Mary Lee, but, thank heaven, he confines himself to 300 pages.

“ Not long ago, having lived a full century of an active military life, a man who was a general died in bed, both honoured and loved. Mr. C. Y. Harrison would have us believe that the vigorous young men who commanded brigades in France died in the same place. Though honoured by many, trusted by more, and loved by a few, a high proportion of British generals were killed on the battlefield. For the rest his story is an exaggeration of a minor scandal at Arras. *Generals Die in Bed* is sensational nonsense. Williamson's *Patriot's Progress* is worth looking at especially for its lino-cuts, quite extraordinarily descriptive and beautiful.

“ Supreme above all books written is Edmund Blunden's *Undertones of War*, an epic which I predict will outlive every other book in the English language concerning the period 1914-18. The poem *Third Ypres* is perhaps the most moving, the most dramatic, the most atmospheric thing ever written about war in any age.

“ *The Red Knight of Germany* is a vivid story of a unique character. In days when aviation is uppermost in the public mind, and having regard to the fact that if there is another war it will certainly be fought largely in the air, this story of the world's master aviator should be on everyone's library list. It is tremendously exciting.

“ What possible service General Crozier imagines he is rendering to his fellow-men or to posterity, or to his late comrades, if they would call him so, by his publication, *A Brass Hat in No-Man's-Land*, passes my comprehension. The bombast of this author, who illustrates his work with photographs of himself, disgusts me even more than the telling of réchauffé trench stories with all the authority of a first witness. I deny absolutely his

contention that we fought the War on 'booze,' and that our soldiers and girls who undertook military service spent their time and expended their virtue in sensual practices.

"In the division in which I served, drink, except for rare medicinal purposes, was made taboo. *A Subaltern's War*, by Charles Edmonds, is not only brilliant, concise reporting, but this lad, with clear eyes, saw what a Brass Hat could not.

"Among all these books, I choose also for comment Conan Doyle's *British Campaigns in Europe* 1914-1918. It is a very faithful picture of the last war depicted on a wide canvas, yet embodying thousands of cameos of detailed descriptions of gallant actions, told with all the graphic power of this master writer.

"And third on our list comes that almost innumerable and very diverse collection of works which, written as fiction, purport to be a psychological examination of the soldier's mind in Flanders. It is a popular pastime to abuse the Staff. I never witnessed a champagne party or a picnic. My generals were insatiably curious, almost greedy also of their share of danger. They were badgered incessantly by politicians desirous of diversions and of victories; but even the politicians, with but a hazy idea of world geography and racial customs, feared fresh alliances and moves in the world battle, so the Western Front became their whipping-boy; and the P.B.I. felt the lash all the time. I readily concede that to the Staff and to the politicians.

"I was never a Staff Officer and hold no brief for those in funk-holes at the base who filched the medals from the fighting forces; but many writers have most unfairly chosen the Staff upon which to vent their spleen. *Men in Battle*, by an Austrian, Latzko, with its stupendous European circulation, is an example. The work is filled with crass sentiment, but the author has a gift of description and a translator almost unequalled. *Sergeant Grischa* is an attack upon the imbecility of the Staff. It is a pity that a story so finely told—its last chapter can only be described as tremendous—should have had as its theme a tilt at military bureaucracy. I know many German officers. And, for example, General von Seeckt, himself an author and philosopher of high reputation, would deny that this book is any true reflection of conditions prevailing in the German Army. And this is true, too, of *All Quiet on the Western Front*. I think the book both vile and degrading, certain of its more suggestive tales being manufactured in the interests of sensationalism, and this is a view

shared by every German officer and soldier with whom I have discussed it.

"*Zero Hour*, by Grabenhorst, possesses much merit from a psychological standpoint, but its author perpetually irritates me. 'What a fine fellow am I,' says he, and then delivers himself as a Pharisee did in regard to a publican.

"C. E. Montague, especially in his *Fiery Particles*, with a rare and delightful pen has contributed some of the best war sketches. *Rough Justice* shows a keen insight, and in the dexterity of his *Particles* the author fully succeeds in making the reader experience again fear of the unknown and the atmosphere of wet Flanders' fields.

"A recent publication is called *Not so Quiet*. There is a film of the same name, whose promoters had the ill-taste to flood the streets with sandwichmen dressed in the khaki of the War. The police intervened, and I wish they had powers to detain the author of this maudlin hysterical nonsense. *WAAC*, whose author apparently wants the royalties without incurring the censorship of publicity and veils her name behind anonymity, is only fit for the sewage of literature and is not sufficiently inviting to commend itself even to the prurient. No woman has yet given us a war book worthy of the service of her sex.

"*Journey's End*, within the obvious limitations of the stage, is a perfect picture of an hour or more somewhere on the Western Front, though within my experience the chief character is overdrawn. The beauty of this play lies in the portrayal of Raleigh and Osborne, faithful reproductions from any battalion on any part of the British front. After the play, the novel disappointed me. Philip Gibbs, now years ago, in his book *Reality of War*, gave us a book which, though equalled, has not been excelled. And I turn from Philip Gibbs to the military impossibility of *Suspense*, with its overdrawn characters purporting to be the truth, but in fact wild fiction. At the theatre I wanted to stand up and shout, 'Make a raid instead of swilling rum! . . . Countermine!' But these puppets played with funk, mitigated by rum, for hours, in a situation where British soldiers would have followed the suggestions which an appreciation of fine acting prevented me from shouting from my stall.

"Richard Aldington's *Death of a Hero* is magnificent in some of its passages, and I like *War is War* because there is a whimsicality in its pages. *Her Privates We* tells of war in all its stark

realism. If I have any criticism to offer of *Undertones of War* it is that in the very virtue of his prose, Blunden loses perhaps a little of his atmosphere, but in *Her Privates We* Frederick Manning has conceded nothing to fine phrases or to the dexterous craftsmanship of poetry and prose, of both of which he is a master.

"From America I have seen nothing except Hemingway's book of the Italian Frontier which is worthy of the part, though small, played by the American soldier. I served for some months with an American division, and I say frankly that the American effort has not been served well by its writers.

"From France, on the other hand, there are two superb books : Barbusse's *Le Feu* and *Les Croix de Bois*, by Dorgeles.

"I must not forget Tomlinson's *All our Yesterdays*, though, like *Grey Dawn*, *Red Night*, its ambit gives little of battle, murder, and sudden death ; and I would think they are largely biographical and therefore reporting. There is also *Peter Jackson*, a book filled with quality, tenderness, and fine writing, the best thing which Gilbert Frankau has ever done.

"War may be degrading, but it did not degrade. I knew generals whom no château could tempt, no security decoy, who could win a battle in the morning and help Belgian farmers stack their corn at eventide ; and I knew thousands of privates who, whether formerly miners, clerks, labourers, or shop assistants, rose above dirt indescribable, and showed themselves to be filled with the high qualities of self-sacrifice, which essential virtue is the very foundation of the Christian faith.

"The human mind does not change with its outer covering ; and you may find a N.C.O. as a gaffer in a mine or as a works foreman, and a general as a managing director, mostly good, some bad. Most men who served could recollect a case of rape, one of cowardice, another of shooting for desertion in the face of the enemy, a memory of a brutal N.C.O., of an unpleasant general, and of a politician and a profiteer who preferred the debauch of a night club to the quiet dignity of English public life. Such recollections, penned by anyone with an elementary *flair* for language, would make a book of character and importance equal to many which have been published. But a truthful picture of the war for posterity can be found—British soldiers in sodden Flanders' fields beneath the scourge of *trömmel feuer* ; horsemen riding shoulder to shoulder at dawn at Bazentine ; Australians in the frozen slime of Ypres ; South Africans in the carnage of Delville Wood ; Canadians breasting the ridge at Vimy ; men

from the blue haze of an English countryside wrestling with death in the Hindenburg Line ; bare-legged boys from shingled coves playing in the pools of the Somme ; town lads strutting the streets of Amiens ; old soldiers, Contemptibles, with insatiable good humour ; and men who as youths knew only Haig's final drive ; those who gripped hands at zero hour, and those who fell in mud and dust and rose no more ; these are the true heroes of war stories, and you will find them living well, noble in death, in the fiction which I have dared to recommend.

" If I had to choose seven books which, all of them, are different in atmosphere, in view-point, which treat of various subjects and both in characterization and in literary style possess little in common with each other, I would select seven incomparably better than the rest.

" I have chosen these carefully so that in the fullness of time my child may judge for himself at least how his father weathered the European storm. Here are the titles : *Undertones of War*, *Good-bye to all That*, *Her Privates We*, *The Storm of Steel*, *British Campaigns in Europe 1914-1918*, *Realities of War*, and *Sixty-four Ninety-four*. This latter, part of the *Spanish Farm Trilogy*, by Mottram, I find it difficult to place, either as biography, reporting, or pure fiction, but certainly I place it among the first seven. But I would also like my boy to read two collections of letters : first those of a boy killed in 1915, Gillespie's *Letters from Flanders*, and thereafter Colonel Fielding's *Letters to his Wife*. There were many such commanding officers as was this pattern of a cultured Englishman. I cannot imagine who were the drunken brutes at whose hands men like St. John Ervine and other writers of eminence suffered, and I can only suppose that in their service they were singularly unfortunate. I know of many commanding officers, and this is my war experience, of whom all their devotion, their zeal, their physical and mental resources were surrendered to those whom they were privileged to command ; they emptied their purses to help a widow or to reinforce a lad going on leave, and, cheerfully, too, threw away their lives in some hopeless cause as at Passchendaele, fruitlessly, as an example of the quality of leadership and of the essential quality of sacrifice.

" An author owes something to posterity, and this is especially so when he writes of a whole generation, largely lost—one million, eighty-nine thousand, nine hundred and nineteen of them—who now possess no support or defence other than the shrines and

memorials which stand in our cities and villages as an inspiration to those who were not called upon to suffer the supreme sacrifice.

“ ‘ They were a wall unto us by night and day.’ ”

And when the correspondence was initiated in *The Times* I contributed a letter, repeated hereunder, as the result of which I have received a great many communications thanking me for the service rendered to the memory of those who can no longer defend themselves.

“ SIR,—I am very glad to note that in the columns of *The Times* has been raised the question as to the propriety of British officers during the late War.

“ I served in Flanders with infantry battalions almost continuously from 1914 until the Armistice. The division with which I served consisted of Regular, Special Reserve, Territorial, and New Army units, and it was composed also of Englishmen from counties in each of the four hemispheres, of both Lowlanders and Highlanders, and of Welshmen, typical, therefore, I think, of the British Army as a whole. The division was concerned in the main engagements of the Western Front, and occupied nearly every sector from Nieuport to the Somme. As its historian, I should be familiar with incidents both great and small, and with its general and detailed character.

“ I remember only one officer being drunk in the line, and he was court-martialled, I did not observe during either attack or defence, any officer, either senior or junior, originating from whatever class, who at any time had absorbed so much alcohol that his condition could be said to be one of intoxication (except once in mass panic). When out of the line we certainly enjoyed convivial parties ; but, even so, officers, like other men of good sense, even though juniors, may be inclined through lack of experience to be indiscreet, realized that drink destroys the brain, and the brains of their lives were required for the safety of those entrusted to their command. That they had a very real sense of this responsibility no one can deny ; and in consequence, even out of the line, I do not recollect more than once or twice having ever observed an intoxicated officer.

“ This is also true of the great number of the rank and file. It is degrading to our national character to suggest, as has been implied in some War literature, that those who fought the War were drunken, craven, or debauched, though, no doubt, a story

can be written around the odd character, here and there, who typified such vices. Not only is it degrading to suggest that such failings were typical of the mass, but, since such suggestions besmirch the War memorials and shrines erected to their memory, it is well for posterity, for the children, younger brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces of those whom these latter hold in honour, that the truth be stated by the authority of experience.

“It may be added that perhaps never in the history of mankind have human beings, experiencing untold terrors and privations, so risen above their physical surroundings as did men on the battlefields of Flanders. Never previously has their spiritual excellence been so marked as in the unselfish comradeship, expressed both openly and inwardly, by man for his fellow-man. Such spiritual excellence does not and cannot proceed from emotions inspired by physical experiences degrading and loathsome to the human mind.”

So I was a free man, “demobbed,” with the assets of the Distinguished Service Order, the Military Cross, some Mentions in Dispatches, and four wounds as to which for pension I refused to make an entry. And I received £300 as gratuity.

CHAPTER XVII

POLITICS AND DIPLOMACY

Scottish politics—Coalition—The Railway strike, 1920—Spennymuir By-Election—Marriage—At the Foreign Office—Setting up the Allied Commissions—In Upper Silesia—Diplomacy—Cardinal Ratti—Krakow.

IN August 1919, I was invited by Colonel C. J. Scovell to take up the appointment of Chief Administrator in Glasgow and in the west of Scotland of Mr. Lloyd George's political organization. All my earlier experience of sociology in Australia, in London slums, and in the privilege of commanding thousands of men during the War impelled me towards such an opportunity. I felt that now at last I could express in political policy the ideals for which I had striven. I cast aside any bitterness which still rankled in my mind, and my enthusiasms gushed through the sluice gates of Mr. Lloyd George's oratorical vision of "a home for heroes."

I opened an office in Glasgow, collected a small staff, and commenced the work of organizing public opinion, in order that expression could be given to this theme. But a douche of cold water was thrown over my enthusiasm in the first month of my office.

A by-election took place in the centre of the Lanarkshire coal-mining district at Bothwell. Scottish Labour, fed on the dismal theories of Karl Marx, suffering in its mining population generations of griefs and grievances, was in no mood to accept Mr. Lloyd George as the Moses to conduct them to the Promised Land. I quickly realized that Scottish Liberalism was a fanatic creed, narrow, bigoted, intolerant, utterly unwilling to yield an inch to the Lloyd Georgian conception of an Anti-Marxian coalition, and even more bitter towards the snobbery and patronage implied by a Tory democracy than it was towards the most rabid Socialist. I fought for coalition, and though it was lamely conceded after honour had been satisfied, hereditary

prejudice and hate found it impossible to apply, at least in Bothwell.

But I was not dismayed. It was only after I had toured my district, from Oban to Galloway, through Stirlingshire and Dumfries, that I realized that there was and could never be any truce between the Wcc Frees and Mr. Lloyd George, who in avoiding political suicide had sold the Asquithian Pass.

As was not unnatural, much of my time and interest was concerned with ex-service men's organizations. I was the chairman of the Old Contemptibles Association, and chairman also of the Joint Ex-service Men's Associations of Glasgow, representing some seventy thousand men. With quite clear-cut notions as to the political promises made to the fighting forces, my chief concern was with their fulfilment. Nothing happened. Winston Churchill came to Glasgow and I headed a deputation to him. He was sympathetic. A fearless man, Churchill. A great fighter, too. He walked the thronged streets of Glasgow while many thick-heads booed him with ignorant cries of Gallipoli, forgetting that he alone among Cabinet Ministers had commanded a battalion in the line, and one of the Royal Scots Fusiliers. But Churchill was powerless to act. Effect was not given to the Acts providing for land settlement for ex-service men and a dozen others as well.

I was instructed from the headquarters of the Political Machine that my business was not to concern itself with policy but with organization alone, and I began to lose heart in the job. I addressed a great many public meetings, and in the course of my reading was profoundly affected by the Liberalism of John Morley. My creed became "The substitution of justice for injustice in the affairs of State." But the super politicians who in coalition had fought the War, and, as they told us, too, had won it, were concerned only with "getting back to normal," which quite obviously was the one thing impossible.

And then came the great railway strike. Scotland is the political hub of the Empire, and Glasgow, Scotland's greatest city, with its splendid Universities, great shipping yards, iron foundries, steel works, coal-mines, and ceaseless commercial activity, is the heart and the head of Scotland.

I found myself suddenly outside the sphere of organization and requested to contribute my views in the form of a memorandum on the issues of the strike. I was completely cut off from London, and having shut myself up in my flat for two days, with

two stenographers, produced a memorandum as an analysis of the position of Labour and of Trade Unionism, transmitted by aeroplane to London, which occasioned a Cabinet meeting. The memorandum was in fact far more the work of Baillie Alex Shand. In my experience I know of no keener student of political events, no more trenchant or witty speaker. Shand possesses, too, the unique distinction of having served as a member of the Glasgow Council and of the L.C.C., the two largest cities in the Empire. Of no friend have I been more proud, his father a porter at Perth railway station. I know, too, of no man in the printing trade who knows more of typography. Truly a master printer. The immediate effect was an order for me to come to Downing Street, and there, for the first time, I met Mr. Lloyd George and members of his intimate council, besides Mr. Winston Churchill, Lord Birkenhead, and other Cabinet Ministers.

I seized the opportunity to express my considered views on policy, and I learnt from Scovell a few hours later that I was considered a dangerous person. Scovell himself, a very ingenious realist, informed me that I was suffering from shell-shock, and to such an infirmity were credited my sincerities and enthusiasms.

There followed the Spen Valley By-election. The fight between Asquithian Liberals and Mr. Lloyd George was by now at its height. The Liberals put forward Sir John Simon as their champion, while Mr. Lloyd George, supported by local Conservatives, put an amiable colonel into the field, a political non-entity whose name even almost escapes me. A Labour man, Tom Myers, too, appeared in the field.

I think it was perfectly obvious that no man was better entitled to represent Spen Valley in the House of Commons than was Sir John Simon. However much anyone might differ from his views, at least he was a statesman, a supreme authority on law, experienced and sincere. It was known that both Simon and Asquith had the support of Lord Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the Forces at home.

An illuminating sidelight on the attachment of Lord Haig for the personality of Mr. Asquith is to be found in the war diaries of General Dawes.

He met Mr. Lloyd George but once, and then only for a brief moment at dinner. In his personal diary he includes as his sole commentary upon Mr. Lloyd George the most diabolical portrait of this statesman ever published. Indeed it would appear that

the blockmaker has been permitted some licence in engraving the portrait, for the ears protrude like those of Satan himself.

Lord Haig, from the Horse Guards, sent a letter to Sir John Simon approving his personality. And this was made public. I was sent hot-foot from Heckmondwike to the Horse Guards with the object of procuring a similar letter for the gallant colonel who was Mr. Lloyd George's nominee. Lord Haig received me with every courtesy, evading the issue and spending a most pleasant half-hour in which he told me again of the splendid services which had been rendered by the battalion under my command. But when I brought to his notice the subject of my mission he curtly informed me that that was not a matter which he would discuss with me.

During our earlier conversation Lord Haig did, however, in response to my question, say that he was "all in favour of the withdrawal of the black troops from the Rhineland"; and considered "that pressure should be brought to bear upon our French Allies to bring this into effect." Later, in 1922, when public opinion was concentrated upon this aggravation of Allied occupation, Lord Haig again expressed himself in similar terms. The lofty ideals and high standards of the British Army were always safe in the keeping of the greatest soldier produced by our race.

The diary of events were that at 10.30 a.m. I received my instructions from Captain Guest, the Chief Whip. At 10.45 I was with Sir Herbert Creedy, Mr. Winston Churchill's secretary at the War Office. At eleven I was with Lord Haig's private secretary, and at twelve with Lord Haig himself.

At 12.30 I had hurried down Whitehall to Downing Street, and was closeted at No. 10 with the Prime Minister, Guest, and Sir William Edge, the other Whip. Mr. Lloyd George stumped up and down the room fuming with passion, and exclaimed, "Haig's refusal is monstrous. I will have him unstuck!"

It all seemed to me ridiculous and trivial. The Prime Minister of Great Britain in a passion because its Commander-in-Chief refused to write a letter of petty political significance. But I was not aware of the tension between the Prime Minister and Lord Haig.

At 3.30 I was again closeted with the two Whips, Guest and Edge, and at 5.30 p.m. I found myself in the War Office. Haig had been summoned by the Secretary of State for War, Winston Churchill. Lord Haig positively and definitely refused to write

any such letter. I wondered then whether Mr. Lloyd George would have the great Field-Marshal banished to retirement, though I thought that such was Lord Haig's popularity with the electorate, that effect would never be given to the Prime Minister's threat. At 4.45 in the afternoon, Mr. Churchill took me with him over to the House of Commons and there was a further interview with the Whips in their own room.

The fact of this trivial affair was that Sir John Simon had been viciously attacked on account of his war service. Simon had in fact served in a legal capacity as a Major in the Royal Air Force, where obviously his services were most valuable. Lord Haig, in reply to these attacks, at the request of Simon, wrote to him to say that the insinuations were of a slanderous character and that Sir John was not a "slacker."

The campaign of vilification succeeded in throwing Sir John Simon out of public life when his services in the House of Commons would have been invaluable, and gave to the Spen Valley as its member a trade-union nonentity, Tom Myers. Such is democracy.

Though I had many friends in Glasgow, after the first few weeks I had no enthusiasm for my work nor enjoyed living in the grey drabness of this city, so I began to look around official life for some other means of occupation. I say official life, for I had already replied to hundreds of advertisements offering my services in commercial life, and had never succeeded even in being granted an interview, though in one case I was politely informed that since all my distinction had been gained upon the battlefield and in military service it was an impertinence for me to imagine that I could be successful in that of commerce.

In all these well-nigh thirty years, romance, except that of the spirit, had played little part in my goings and comings. Having had no sisters I had been thrown almost exclusively into the company of boys. Moreover, in my generation and among those I met, we boys eschewed female society, preferring Spartan games and a community exclusively of men. That was especially so among those destined for the Army. To be observed in the company of girls would deprive us of our manly prestige. So, except at dances, where we behaved with gallantry, and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves, women did not enter into our lives.

It is said that a sailor has a wife in every port. That is as may be. But certainly there were neither ports nor wives in my sojourn in the Sudan, among the Indian foothills, or on the

Rhodesian veldt. And I was singularly preoccupied with my work and leisure exercises. Then, at the age when I might have begun seriously to consider the wisdom of matrimony, I was flung into a world war with a rather less than average chance of surviving it.

There had been two faint romantic attachments, sudden in their beginning, swifter in their termination, and with no regrets on either side. Affairs of the intellect rather than of the heart. One in Australia, never serious. The other during the War, in Scotland, a very charming literary agreement, a good companionship, which delighted me, and held me, too, like a sheet-anchor, during nearly three years of the War. I think we might have quarrelled dreadfully had we ever mated, too much alike. But she married, God bless her.

And then in the summer of 1919 what I had always feared, and from what I had always fled, took me stealthily. I had seen her twice while I was on leave from the Front, in the church at Harrow Weald, which I attended with my mother, who was acquainted with her family.

In the last days of July I was invited to spend the week-end. The objective was not matrimony but to pack up my kit stored in my mother's house at Pinner, sold some months before. We did not attend church on that Sunday, but made ready for a further ceremonial in its precincts. Before lunch we were engaged. I am told it is always difficult to approach these matters to respective parents, but the suggestion to parents-in-law to be was received, if with surprise, at least with most amazing kindness and generosity. My mother, accustomed to my sudden decisions, beamed with pleasure and scolded me a little. "Go and woo her," was her advice. And I can say with truth that I have never wearied of carrying out its behests.

My father-in-law, Charles Henry Durham, was well known and esteemed in the City of London, a merchant, with considerable dealings with South Africa, Canada, and Australia, pre-eminently and absolutely a business man. My wife had already much experience of soldiers' ways, for she had served as a V.A.D. in Lady's Denham's hospital and elsewhere, almost always as a nurse in the operating theatre.

Charles Durham died in January 1931. He was born in Australia nearly seventy years ago. But especially, as senior partner of Messrs. Findlay, Durham and Brodie, was he an authority upon South Africa, and had known all the great

figures of its history. In their obituary notices both *The Times* and *South Africa* paid high tribute to his "high standards, generosity, his strong determination and strict probity."

On the 8th November we were married at Harrow Weald. The famous band of the "93rd" played in the church and afterwards at the reception; the honoured guests were men of my battalion: then a short week's honeymoon, and then return to my flat in Glasgow and to work. This good lady joined me in Upper Silesia, and in 1923 presented me with a son, James Graham Pinney. Disastrous marriages are fashionable. We are not in the fashion. For here indeed is a rare woman. A good business head, which permits a household to run smoothly, and I confess that I have never yet seen one single account. A wide sympathy with human affairs which has given to her tasks of usefulness in nursing, and in the organization of funds devoted to earnest charities. And not least a devotion to my interests which has smoothed, each and every day, the path of difficulty.

I can leave the ways of erotic emotionalism to others less blessed than myself.

My war with the War Office had terminated and a generous sympathizer there named me to the Foreign Office for employment with one of the Commissions resulting from the Treaty of Versailles. I crossed Whitehall to the Foreign Office and interviewed the First Secretary in charge of the Eastern European Department, as it happened, a connection, S. P. Waterlow. It was not due to any family love that I was entrusted with the task within the Foreign Office itself of selecting officers for these Commissions, and became a third-grade official at a princely salary of £100 a month.

The principle enunciated in the selection of officers for the Plebiscite Commissions was a knowledge of French or German, preferably both. So candidates began to come forward. It is a curious commentary on public-school education, indeed upon education generally, that among the applicants was scarcely one of cultured type or to whom ordinarily would be entrusted the difficulty of upholding the tradition of the British people among foreigners so recently their enemies, or to whom would be given the task of carrying through with fine sensibility and feeling the difficult diplomatic task of a plebiscite. In the heyday of Britain's industrial prosperity, great commercial houses could not have been particular in their selection of those who looked after their interests abroad, and may have been satisfied with men

sufficiently learned in the language of a foreign country to enable them as salesmen to dispose of goods.

These for the most part were the men who offered themselves for high posts in a difficult mission in the British Diplomatic Service. After my first interviews I pleaded that an over-accentuation was being given to the language question. My experience in the East was that it takes but a week or two in a foreign country to acquire a working knowledge of its language. It seemed that these Commissions would be of some duration, and I suggested that the main principle of selection should be the choice of men whose antecedence in past life proclaimed them as reliable representatives of their country.

To some extent these views received support, but it was too late to make changes among those already appointed. After the staffs for the Commissions in Upper Silesia, Allenstein, Marienwerder had been appointed, I was sent myself by the Foreign Office as Political Secretary and Aide-de-camp to Colonel Harold Percival, the British Commissioner already appointed in Upper Silesia.

The fact was, as it was explained to me, that the French Government had sent to Silesia the cream of its Diplomatic and Military Services, and Percival found himself hopelessly embarrassed with a staff of men unversed in public affairs, and with a host of *embusqués* as his military advisers. Nothing suited the purpose of the French better. And I was sent out with the full-dress uniform of a professional soldier, with the object of giving, as I was told, a cachet to British interests on the mission.

If the politicians and the wiseacres at home had disappointed me, the great mission of interpreting the principles of the Treaty of Versailles only added to the disillusion. If I had any function at all it was to join in the general scramble for the spoils of war and to pretend all the time that what I was doing was in honourable fulfilment of the Fourteen Cardinal Points of President Wilson which had been the structural basis of every clause of the Treaty.

Colonel Harold Percival was a man of very considerable ability, a student rather than a soldier, and a ripe German scholar. At the house of Hatzfeldt I used to sit and listen to learned arguments upon Germany's constitution and literature, Schiller, Goethe, and the other masters. But in such a situation the qualities of the soldier were required infinitely more than those of the student. Percival was supported by F. B. Bourdillon, an

Oxford don and a fine wit, possessing ill-health, who could add nothing to Percival's lack of determination and of courage.

The majority of the Commission were hopeless nonentities, half-baked professors with a bowing acquaintance with economics, commercial travellers reblossomed with the red tabs of Staff Officers, and a host of others who had never enjoyed the spending power of such large salaries before. And having gotten their jobs at a princely salary, a veritable fortune in terms of the mark, they used it as a means to every kind of excess which the whim of the moment prompted.

The French, on the other hand, in every department of administration, employed picked men. General Le Rond had vacated the appointment of Chief of Staff to Maréchal Foch, and both he and his staff laughed derisively at the noodles sent out to check his own will and wilfulness.

From the beginning of the Commission until its end there was never the slightest doubt that the French had determined to dismember Silesia from Germany's side, and the objective of the pantomime in which I played a leading part was directed always towards this end.

I had come to Germany still animated by a cordial dislike of the Germans, a prejudice produced by the War. I was scarcely a month in Upper Silesia before I realized that Germans cloaked with a new humility, with all their faults, were infinitely preferable to the remorseless logic of French diplomatists and industrialists controlling the activities of Le Rond. I do not quarrel with the logic, only with the position in which those responsible for British policy found themselves.

When I first went to Oppeln I lived with Colonel Percival ; but he urged me to send for my wife, and early in November we opened house in Oppeln. The French knew perfectly well that I had been sent to Silesia to add a little gilt to the lily as well as to act as a kind of spy both on the French and on the British members of the Commission, so the French ladies who played up to their husbands in this game of diplomatic hide-and-seek flattered me unmercifully.

The months of irritation and exasperation which were the principal feature of allied harmony in Silesia do not matter to this story. I was convinced both of the unfairness and unwisdom of the decisions taken, and as I have contemplated the decline of British industry and the Empire's receding economic position, my conviction has become a burning faith. The dismemberment

of Silesia was a death-blow to the British coal-mining industry. The Treaty of Versailles, while contributing to us immense new burdens under the Mandatory System, at the same time stripped us of our capacity to meet them.

But my Silesian pilgrimage was a very pleasant holiday in a very entertaining and pleasant society. If we had all been together upon the Riviera I cannot imagine a more delightful community. But as it was even when amusing ourselves, as we frequently did with theatrical entertainments, concerts, soirées, skating, or at tennis, the hate engendered at the Conference Table found expression.

Until I set forth on the ice rink at Oppeln I had never previously embarked on skates, and it is the truth that so great was my speed that I never had time for a fall, but I took good care that when I sought respite from this exercise I would cushion myself against any of the French officials who happened to be in sight.

Madame Le Rond pirouetted on the ice, like Genée in the ballet. Even the scowling Germans would applaud as her light figure danced across the ice. The General reserved his dexterity in skating over thin ice for the Conference Room, and he was seldom seen outside it, except as the centre piece of a reception and occasionally at a dinner party. He was very short, with a grey complexion and eyes like flint. A huge moustache curled on either side of his face beneath finely drawn nostrils. He exhibited neither love nor hate, pleasure nor annoyance, and only once did I see him smile with the light of sincere satisfaction in his eye. That was when at the house of Colonel Percival in my presence as his Aide-de-camp, the British Commissioner decorated Le Rond on behalf of His Majesty with the knighthood of the Order of St. Michael and St. George. Le Rond, flattered and pleased, unbent with rare sincerity, exposing a heart capable of friendship and loyalty, and in that moment I regretted that these qualities were reserved exclusively to the behests of Raymond Poincaré. No man could bring himself permanently to dislike Le Rond. I found myself always disarmed before his capacity and vigour, admiring this Sphinx beneath a sky-blue uniform. But since almost invariably my chief suffered defeat at his hands I could only loathe Le Rond and the Government behind him. Our own Government at home appeared to have no will of its own, and while Le Rond pursued his course with irresistible logic, we on the other hand were like rudderless ships in a naval battle and hopelessly outclassed.



GERMAN VOTERS ARRIVING AT OPPELN, UPPER SILESIA, FROM ALL OVER EUROPE, TO RECORD THEIR VOTES
IN THE PLEBISCITE

But I was very happy in my flat. This abode was on a third floor overlooking the municipal gardens and above the offices of the Stadt Baurat, who with his family also, occupied the floor below. If Herr Maurer, the Baurat, detested the Occupation with unquenchable hate he was a kindly landlord and glad to receive, also, the money which I paid him in rent. He had two anæmic little boys, half starved as the result of the British Naval Blockade, and we were able to "wangle" milk for these children denied to the rest of the population.

The flat consisted of a large bedroom, a *salon*, a tiny dining-room, and a bathroom combined with kitchen. That is, hot water to a large bath could be supplied from a geyser which afforded gas also to a ring, and on this, except when we went to the Allied Club or dined with the Commissioner, all our meals were cooked.

Christmas Day, 1920. "The British Commissioner has great pleasure in accepting the kind invitation of the Malapanerstrasse kitchen and bathroom staff et aura l'honneur de s'y rendre le 25 a otto ore della serra. L'ordre a colonello inglesi il signore Tidborrio de s'y rendre aussi sera donné. Ecco!" Thus Babel.

I had been away touring the districts for some days shortly after my occupation of the flat and when I returned I found that the good landlord had filled the bath with living fish. Fish were a rare luxury in Oppeln and they were sent up in glass tanks from Berlin and from the sea beyond. Customers would purchase these in the tanks and then tip them into the baths, where they would live for some weeks while the family, not so interested in ablutions as are British officers, remained unwashed. At first I found it all very amusing, but finally in exasperation, took the toasting-fork and harpooned the four remaining fish, presenting these to Herr Maurer.

I had two servants, one a Polish girl, a peasant, almost savage, who summer and winter alike wore only the thinnest cotton dress and neither shoes nor stockings. The other was a manservant, a general factotum who showered devotion upon me. He had been a feldwebel in a Prussian regiment of Grenadiers, and was as good a servant as I have ever had in my life, for I afforded a very friendly tolerance to his one absorbing vice. On Saturdays he would disappear completely, but return punctually on Monday at eight o'clock. He would never tell me where he had been, but he always returned with his face bruised and

sometimes with bandages. I learnt long afterwards that he felt it his duty each Saturday to go to Kattowitz and there to engage in "Pole-baiting." Quite simply he was a member of a German patriotic organization whose functions were to interrupt Polish propaganda.

Compared with the other British members of the Commission, I was very fluent in the French language, and because the British Commissioner spoke it but haltingly I was much in demand. I enjoyed the pleasant society of the French and the culture which they had brought to a Commission which in its British ranks was so painfully absent. The French, too, showed me some respect as having been a Regular officer, while they cordially disliked most of my fellow-countrymen with whom their duty threw them into association. Many of them imagined that Colonel Percival was Jewish, for in appearance he was sallow with a Semitic nose and deep-set heavy eyes. They suspected that Jewish financial interests were urging British policy always towards political reorientation, and thought that Percival was employed as the chisel with which to carve a British-German entente. The hereditary hate of the Polish people for the Jews needs no emphasis. The French sought to make Percival abhorrent to them.

The British Commissioner, being a ripe German scholar, and as a consequence possessing little sympathy with the French, found himself by inclination associated with the great German families of Silesia. I used to go with him frequently to the house of Prince Hatzfelt, a distinguished, learned, and charming old man who served us English tea in the English fashion. I was a visitor, also, at the Schloss of Prince Hohenlohe, who in any land would have passed as an English gentleman. He is a bachelor, living with his men-servants, farming his lands, interested in the chase and in literature, and literally worshipped by his servants.

I was the guest of the Prince again in 1929, after it was known among the German Silesians that I had waged a long fight for fair play to these nationals. The finest linen was laid on my bed, so thin, so gossamer-like that it felt like silk: the blankets were of the finest merino lamb, soft as a woman's skin. The bed was like the one for which I hope for in Paradise. The room was immense, richly decorated not alone with priceless antique furniture, but modernized with every convenience of water and cunningly hidden lights. Two liveried men-servants, ex-Guardsmen, waited always on my slightest whim. They stooped to

unlace my boots as my bearer had done in India, placed a shirt over my head and did up its buttons ; and when I went to my bath they placed a bridge across its end on which was stood a mahogany mirror, with lighted candles, and I was seated so that while they soaped my back and shaved me I could contemplate with ease such manly beauty as I possessed. And when I signified that I would leave the water they dried and massaged me beyond the powers of the most skilled attendant in a Turkish bath.

Later when I was in Berlin I called upon my friend, Geheimrat von Moltke, the grandson of Germany's greatest Chancellor, and he said to me :

"I, a very humble citizen, was the guest of Prince Hohenlohe during the week-end." I wondered why, with a twinkle in his eye, he referred to himself with such humility. He continued after a pause, "I slept in the room which had been occupied by yourself. The servants said to me, 'This is where Oberst Hutchison slept, and this is where he bathed, and this is where he sat.'"

So that I realized that a prophet may have some honour outside his own country and a British soldier may still be respected among those who learned to like him on the opposite side of "no-man's-land" and to find his affection when he was one of an army of occupation.

I do not pretend that the German families who showed to the British their hospitality were entirely without guile. Obviously they would and did seek to separate and divide the Allies. To offset the loss of prestige which especially French ladies might feel in the land of their exile, a number of Polish aristocrats were imported as a foil to the hospitality of Hatzfeldt, Hohenlohe, and Henkels Donnersmarck. Prince Czartierewski, scarcely Polish, if in name, wedded to the Austrian Court, thoroughly international, both Hohenzollern and Hapsburg, his wealth scattered throughout Europe, his marriage in Austria and his heart in Paris, joined the *tricouleur*.

We found ourselves segregated, therefore, British and German together, French and Poles together, both socially and as the objective of the Commission, while the Italians, led by General Marinis, played pitch-and-toss both in the Commission and in social affairs.

But Marinis, fat, with all the appearance of stupidity, was a master brain equal with that of Le Rond himself.

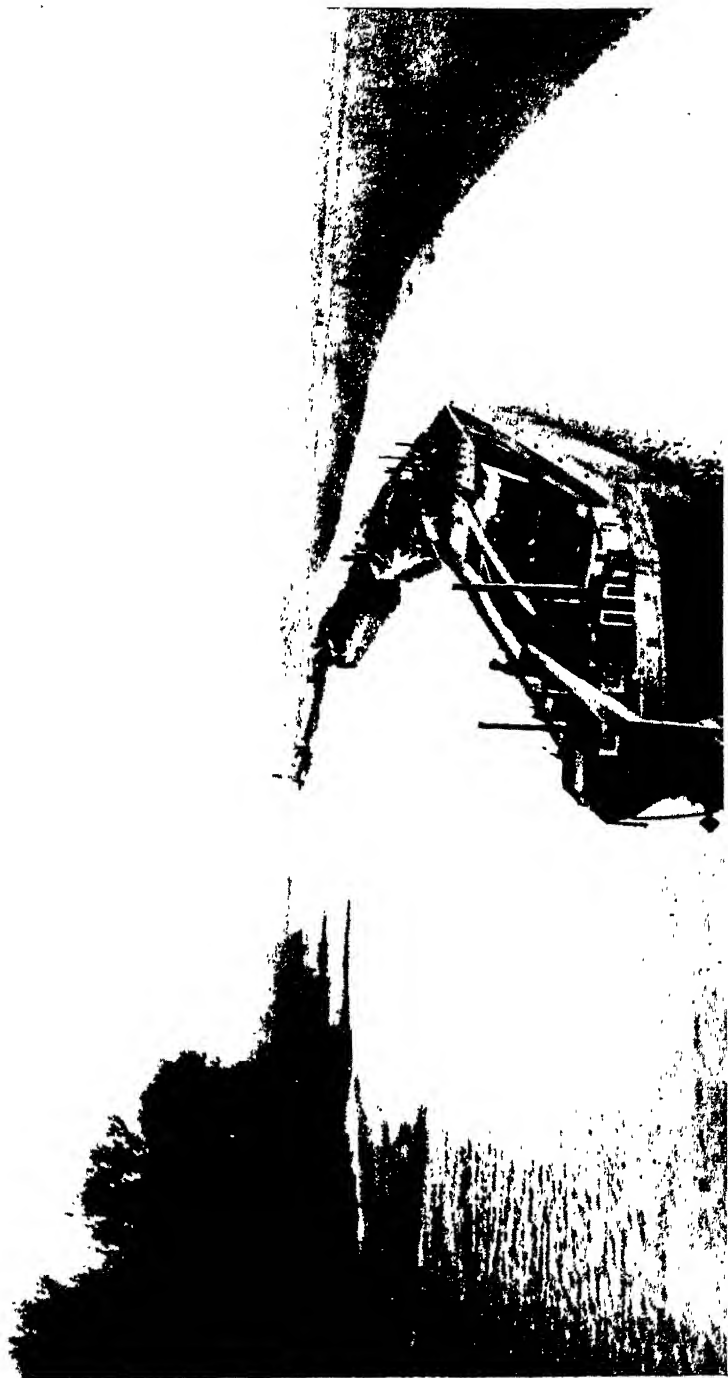
The key to the Silesian vote was the religious issue, Roman

Catholicism. Cardinal Ratti was an Italian, an heroic soul whose birthplace was in the Alps of Piedmont. He is now Pope Pius the XIth. It was my duty frequently to wait on him, to hear his wishes, and to escort him also to the house of the British Commissioner. Like myself he was an enthusiastic mountaineer. He had climbed nearly every peak in the Alps, and this established a common bond between us which only mountaineers know. At dinner once he turned to me and said, "The stimulation to the mind and spirit of attaining to heights sublime, through tempest and difficulty, is unmatched."

The Pope was as witty as he is wise and I found him invariably a most charming companion, while I knew him to be an able and astute diplomatist.

I have little doubt that Cardinal Ratti threw his influence into the scale when the Silesian decision was made. He may not have felt very friendly towards France. Though no doubt the partition of Silesia was unfair to Germany and has rudely damaged British trade, nevertheless in the economic sphere it has fortified Poland, so that on the European Eastern Frontier there still remains a strong Catholic bulwark against the poison of Bolshevik materialism. I would be sure that Cardinal Ratti foresaw this and having foreseen it fought for it with all his spiritual and temporal might. I know nothing of his spiritual power, except that he is the elected head of the greatest Church in Christendom; but I do know that mentally and physically he was as well equipped as any of the great statesmen and industrial captains with whom I have come in contact.

An accommodating tolerance and genuine affection for the French found me frequently in their company and in that of the Polish officials of the Plebiscite. I had long talks with Wojciech Korfanty, the champion of Polish rights. He was short in stature, with a high, intellectual forehead, and not unlike Lloyd George in appearance. Korfanty's father had been a working miner, and he was not only a magnificent orator but a man of considerable business acumen and a first-class journalist. He understood the force and power of propaganda and was skilled in all its artifices. And he was a devoted Catholic. Like Lloyd George, also, success seems to have deprived him of idealistic motives, for following the Allied decision, he took for himself numerous directorships in French-controlled companies, and became one of Silesia's first industrial magnates. From that day his influence waned, and after a few years he found himself displaced from



"THE KOREANTY LINE"

Being the objective of the Polish insurgents in May 1921. The River Oder at Oppeln.

power, as the leader of an insignificant party in the Silesian Sejm, eternally critical of an administration which he had failed to lead along the democratic path, and very recently he was under lock and key in a fortress in Eastern Poland.

Krakow, more than Warsaw, was the real hub of Polish activity, for it was in this Galician city that the insurgent army of Korfanty was equipped, and from this city, too, came and went emissaries who hatched the plots which made of the Silesian Commission the laughing-stock of all Europe except France.

At the invitation of Count Pusowski, I went to Krakow accompanied by my wife and Craig, formerly Agricultural Advisor to the Egyptian Government and the Commission's Food Controller. The contrast between the two sides of the border was most marked. We left Germany's magnificent military roads, fine dwellings, and well-organized industrial undertakings for the country roads of Poland. These possessed neither surface nor bottom, and it was with the greatest difficulty that our motor car was kept from slithering into the deep ruts on either side of the track. The villages through which we passed were squalid and filthy beyond description, while the vast agricultural lands were either entirely neglected or tilled by methods little in advance of those of the Upper Nile. In no part of the world have I observed squalor so hopeless, so devastating as that of the considerable town of Benzin. More than 80 per cent of its inhabitants are Jews, and in all the cities of Poland a percentage of this race almost as high dominates the population. But the Jews of Poland alone understand financial and commercial technique, and are, as a factor in the Constitution, a present economic necessity.

We might have made the journey to Krakow by train, but the rolling-stock was so poor that the journey would have taken us as long over a Polish rail as by motor car. Moreover, travellers told us that the railway carriages were so infested with bugs, lice, and fleas that a journey of this character would prove to be most unpleasant.

Towards the end of a day of jolting and skidding we climbed steadily to a high hill on the edge of the Carpathian Mountains, and from here the winding Vistula and the towers and minarets of Poland were laid out before us. High above them raised on an eminence above the curling river stood the cathedral with its copper dome, green, like an emerald set among opals and

pearls, a gem against the blue of the heavens flecked with clouds.

And then we descended to Krakow itself, a shabby, lop-sided town ; bankrupt ; marvellous frescoes in its dingy palaces ; a gigantic and proportionately filthy Ghetto ; shops laden with art treasures deposited or pawned by *émigrés* from Russia ; a tramway system matched only within my experience with that of the mud flats of Omdurman ; streets like see-saws ; universities ; myriads of students and innumerable monks of Heaven alone knew how many different Orders ; and this half-baked antiquity was producing every kind of social disease. What a camouflage were these tapestry-hung palaces, these courtyards, architecturally reminiscent of the Italian Renaissance. These universities and endless cathedrals !

But there are certain cities that cannot be approached without a sense of reverence and solemnity. Rome, Constantinople, Athens, Jerusalem, fill the sympathetic traveller with wonder and deep joy, but Krakow, saturated in the history of almost continuous tragedy and suffering, with its copper-domed cathedral of unparalleled loveliness, dominating the surrounding plains and the spirits of tens of thousands of the faithful, will haunt even a chance traveller to the end of life. Krakow is the soul of Galicia ; and once under the spell of this romantic countryside, escape is impossible.

The town of Krakow, the historic capital of ancient Galicia, is one of the most fascinating cities in the world, and for centuries it has been the centre of a quite remarkable culture, wholly Polish in character.

With my wife we went to the Imperial Hotel, formerly the centre of society and fashion. The hall porter, who spoke English, was so overwhelmed by our visit that he promptly assigned to us the Royal Suite, the total cost of which, together with our meals, was 1s. 6d. a head per day. The good Count Pusowski took us under his wing for the period of our visit and was earnest and ardent as a propagandist for Poland.

I attended a dinner at which appeared all the notables of Krakow, the remarkable features of which were, that the orchestra in the adjoining restaurant played the National Anthem without cessation from the beginning to the end of our entertainment, and no drinks were served, not even water on the table, except *crème de menthe*. I was nearly desperate half-way through dinner and found a trivial excuse to leave the table and retired

to a tap, where I assuaged my thirst, and this in the height of tropical summer.

We dined also with a lady who kept up a kind of regal state and, it was alleged, was a direct descendant of the Polish queens.

But the most amusing part of our visit was the manner in which our guide loved to show off the habits of the Jews, for whom he had a most intense hatred. In his company we visited synagogues and were shown their filth and squalor. We were told that at the Passover the Jews of Krakow would take a Christian baby and slaughter it, thereafter plastering its blood on the portals of those of their own faith, and we were told also that the Jews were responsible for all the iniquities and oppression of the Poles for countless centuries.

As an exhibition of their greed our guide took us to the centre of the Ghetto, a huge reserve of the town, exclusively Jewish. As we drove through the streets surrounded on all sides by Yiddish people, the men absurd and grotesque with their black or red *peisi* curls, my guide suddenly turned to me and asked me if I had a five-pound note in my pocket. I had, and produced it. He stood up in the carriage and waved it, calling to the Jews to bid. Within the space of seconds the carriage was surrounded by hundreds of Jews clamouring for the money and bidding for the note in Polish marks. At that time the rate of exchange was some twenty thousand Polish marks to the pound, and simply fabulous offers were made for my treasure as the people swarmed round the carriage. At length I replaced the note in my pocket, and some of the more enterprising of the Jews followed the carriage to my hotel and throughout my visit they persisted in making offers.

The shops of Krakow were filled with treasures sold and pawned by refugees from Russia. Pictures and priceless pottery, garments, jewellery, ikons, and the rarest glass. Some of these I could not resist, and I started a collection of bric-à-brac, added to in Berlin where also the rate of exchange was very favourable, which has in it some rare art treasures. My training and artistic leanings were a pretty sure guide to my purchases and have been singularly fortunate, and have only cost me a few shillings.

CHAPTER XVIII

PREVENTING A PUTSCH AND PUBLICITY

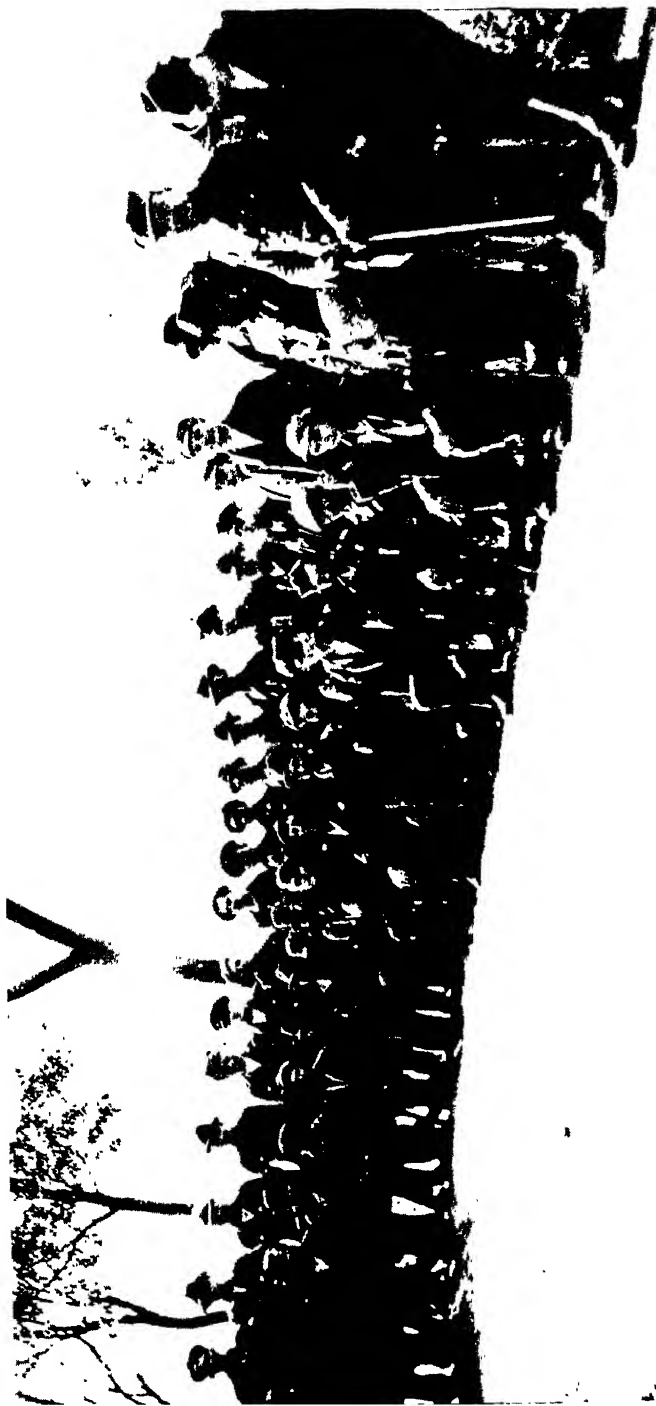
Korfanty—The insurgent rebellion in Silesia—Through Polish and German lines—Procrastination—Armistice—Fleet Street—The curse of “done their bit”—A super “lounge-lizard”—Boosting a hotel—Eating to music.

SPECIAL correspondents of the London Press described the incidents which follow under headlines, “The British officer who possibly saved Europe”; “British officer who stopped a war”; “How Polish and German forces were persuaded to sign an armistice”; “Colonel Hutchison’s feat.”

I quote from the *Daily Graphic* on the 21st May: “The ability of one determined man to change the course of history has never been so splendidly illustrated as it is in the story which I have to tell to-day.

“It is one of those tales which convert *The Three Musketeers* from romance to reality. In spite of all his splendid imagination Dumas could not have constructed a tale to compare with the true story of the events in Silesia during the past three weeks.”

In May 1921 after the Plebiscite had been held, and the inhabitants of Upper Silesia had duly recorded their votes as to whether they desired to remain within the German Reich or become part of the new Polish state, there was a period of silence and of intense anxiety. Passions, especially among the industrial workers, miners, iron, steel, and chemical workers, due to Korfanty’s campaign of propaganda, had been aroused to fever heat. British Kreis Controllers, from the districts on the Polish border, Lublinitz, Kattowitz, and Pless, and police officers, too, had hurried into British Headquarters with tales of goings and comings from the Polish border, of the appearance of officers in the uniform of Haller’s army, and even of the active connivance of the French officers and officials within their own



A GROUP OF POLISH INSURGENTS
Mostly pit lads, armed with rifles, under command of an officer in the uniform of Haller's Army,
paraded for and photographed by the author near Lublinitz.

districts. I was occupied night and day ciphering and deciphering telegrams to the Foreign Office.

The situation was serious, but the French Government replied to Lord Curzon with vacillation, while the Polish Government repudiated any knowledge of what was happening in Krakow and from within the Polish boundaries, and held itself as not responsible for the activities of Korfanty, who, the Government was at pains to point out, was a German citizen.

The self-styled General, Korfanty, had his military headquarters at Beuthen and from there marshalled his forces.

The decision of the Commission as to the partition of Silesia resulting from the Plebiscite had been taken in secret, and I awaited the final authority of the Council of Ambassadors in Paris. But that secret was not closely kept; and I can only imagine that its details were passed to Korfanty by the French members of the Commission. But France had never wavered from its policy, that all Silesia should pass to Poland; and with inflexible logic and consistency had played to this end throughout all the proceedings of the Commission.

Except for minor adjustments along the frontier, and for the contribution of the Kreis of Pless to Poland, this province having voted almost solidly for adherence to the new state, the Commissioners had decided by the majority vote of both the British and Italian Commissioners that Silesia should remain within the German Reich. This suited neither France nor Korfanty.

On the 1st May, General Korfanty struck. The French troops had been removed ostensibly for manœuvres to a remote corner of Silesia, wholly German and not in dispute, and an insurgent army swept through the towns and occupied the villages and agricultural districts.

At the corner of the old German Empire, beyond Kattowitz facing what had been the Empires of the Czar and that of Austria, where Northern Galicia met the eastern extremity of Poland, had stood a vast granite figure of Prince Bismarck, surmounting an enormous granite plinth. The first act of the insurgents was to tamp dynamite charges into this memorial to Germany's Imperial Founder and to blow it to smithereens. In my possession now is what was formerly part of Bismarck's granite nose, a souvenir of unpent passion.

The bandits from the forest, always a threat to law and order, who formerly had beheaded more than one official by stretching a wire cable across the roads, hitched to pine trees, and which

skimmed the chassis of our motor cars travelling at high speed by night, came out from their lairs and joined the insurgents.

For the most part Korfanty's army consisted of youngsters under twenty years of age. Some were armed with Mauser rifles, but many with great clubs cut from the forests. Their disorderly ranks marched through the villages burning the homesteads of German citizens. Arson was accompanied by rape and murder. Even German foremen who had served both the workmen and the German owners for many years were hurled down the pit shafts. Foresters were butchered to make a Polish holiday. Near Kattowitz a handful of Italian soldiers formed a thin line across the road to prevent the passage of the insurgents. Seventeen soldiers against a horde of hooligans. The Poles opened fire and murdered them to a man, marching over their dead bodies.

The sphinx-like President of the Commission, master of diplomacy and of the situation, with fine rhetoric denounced lawlessness, but permitted day after day futile adjournments of the Commission to take place while the insurgents with ammunition, guns, and rifles stalked westwards towards the very centre of Government itself.

The British and Italian Commissioners sought to bring an end to procrastination, and could only protest with unconcealed rage, yet were powerless to act without the authority of their respective Governments. I telegraphed vainly for instructions, and my telegrams which were sent over the wires via France were mutilated so that they became indecipherable, or were delayed for hours.

The Italian Commissioner shut himself up in his house in a fit of temper, while the British Commissioner retired to his bed with symptoms of migraine. He was an exhausted man after eighteen months of procrastination and of half-hearted support from his Government at home, and when I went to his bedside on the evening of the 3rd May he was indeed a very sick man.

Alone, at least as one prepared to act, I had all the facts of the situation. Alone I knew of all the events throughout this vast territory. Alone I knew that the Germans had armed themselves in defence of their fatherland. Their secret organization had been prepared as a foil to that of Korfanty, and now the Commission and its officers were to be made ridiculous in the eyes of the world, while, resulting from the Treaty of Versailles, Germans and Poles commenced a new war upon one another. I knew

that Italy could be relied upon to do nothing, at any rate speedily, to arrest the situation, to prevent bloodshed or to interfere with the *coup d'état*, so I asked Colonel Percival if he would grant me full authority to do what I could to produce an armistice while the British Government at home made up its mind whether it would send the troops, for which we had asked, to restore law and order and the prestige, at least, of the British section of the Commission. Colonel Percival gave me a free hand.

I called immediately upon Herr von Moltke, the German diplomatic representative in Oppeln. He received me coldly. He pointed out that what was happening was in defiance of the Treaty of Versailles, that the Allies had guaranteed not only the government of Silesia but also the safety of Minorities.

"If," he said, "the Allies, or Great Britain which you represent, have failed to keep the bond, then you have no right to ask that I shall bring pressure to bear upon my own nationals who have every right to resist an armed insurrection and to defend their own lives and property." I argued that at least it was his duty to prevent bloodshed. He agreed. But he pointed out that blood was already flowing, and not through any fault of the Germans over whose interests he was watching. I could move him to do nothing.

I returned to Colonel Percival but was told that he could not be seen by anyone, so I ordered his chauffeur to bring the British Commissioner's limousine to the front of the house. It carried the Union Jack in front of the bonnet.

I returned to Herr von Moltke. He was impatient and unconciliatory in his manner. Then I sat down beside him and spoke to him on equal terms, as two brother officers might in drawing up a plan of campaign. I said to him, "If I can persuade Korfanty to make no further move, to take no further action, will you on your side give me your co-operation to prevent the German Defence Corps from attacking Korfanty's troops in their present position?"

"An armistice!" he exclaimed. "To what end?"

And then, without authority, I pledged him the support of a British brigade.

He replied, "I accept the word of a British officer."

It was already late in the evening and night had set in. Herr von Moltke entered my waiting motor car, and we left the excited streets of Oppeln for the north. For hours we journeyed, scarcely a word passing between us, until at about eleven at night the car

suddenly drew up, and in its headlights we could see armed men standing across the road. Two of these immediately boarded the car and sat beside the driver ; two others, armed to the teeth, entered the car. I was attired in full uniform, my revolver loaded in its holster attached to my brown belt on my side. I turned to von Moltke. " This I cannot permit," I said. " The car carries the flag of my country."

" I am powerless," he replied.

I nudged him with the butt end of my revolver. " I must request you," I said, " to use your authority. I cannot permit this."

He bade those inside the car to alight, and gave instructions that one sentry only should sit beside the driver and direct him to the headquarters of the German Command. I do not know to what destination we were driven, but at every cross-road were armed sentries in uniform and I saw machine-guns and signs of the material of war.

Finally the car drew up before a house and I was ushered at once into an upper room. Seated around a table were a number of German officers. Their names were not given to me, but Herr von Moltke introduced me. For long hours I played for a cessation of hostilities. Again I guaranteed a British brigade.

" When ? " inquired the chief of the officers, I believe General von Arnim.

" Immediately," I replied, " from the army on the Rhine."

We sat until two in the morning and at the end the Germans told me that my guarantee was accepted and that they were prepared to sign an armistice provided that I could myself secure one in equal terms from the Polish Commander.

I set out again from the neighbourhood of Kreuzburg to the town of that name. Dawn broke. As we came to a bend in the road a machine-gun opened fire. It shivered the glass of the limousine and punctured the radiator, and as the car had been brought to a halt the fire ceased. I alighted.

We were on the outskirts of Kreuzburg, and observing my uniform the sentry permitted me to advance, though he fired another shot which cracked like a whip over my head as I came towards him. The motor car was useless, so I went on foot into Kreuzburg accompanied by a dishevelled boy armed with a rifle.

Lounging in the Plaz were dozens of armed peasants and miners and a host of machine-guns. I went at once to the house

of the British Assistant Kreis Controller. I informed him quickly of the situation while his wife gave me breakfast.

Then he brought out his own motor car and I inquired of a uniformed officer the way to the headquarters of his Command. He indicated on a map a farm-house some few miles from Lublinitz. The roads were filled with troops of lads in civilian clothing ; and at each post we were halted and in impeccable French, the French of a Frenchman, I was asked my business. At one point were some two hundred lads being drilled in a field ; and while I halted, the officer in charge, a Frenchman, took delight in demonstrating to me how well advanced were the recruits under his command. I photographed him in the centre of his company and then went on towards Lublinitz.

We found the "general of the Bytrom Group," a short, aggressive-looking man in a slouch hat and civilian clothing, seated in the farm-house surrounded by his staff. He was in no way pleased to see me and still less was he responsive to the terms of my request. But, when I informed him of the strength of the German opposition and that the Germans themselves proposed immediate opposition, he was more attentive to my suggestion for an armistice. The terms of this I drew up myself in French. It was a document of the simplest character, adhering to an armistice for forty-eight hours provided that no action be taken by the German Defence Corps. It read :

"Provonkau, 10m Mai, 1921.

"ORDRE DU JOUR,

"BYTROM GROUPE.

"Declare être d'accord pour conclure une Armistice de quarante-huit heures à dater du dix mai 1921, jusqu'au dix mai 1921, huit heures, sur les conditions formelles qu'aucune action militaire ne soit entreprise pendant ce temps par les Allemands. Cet ordre est transmis à tout le front dependant de ce groupe."

Both the Kreis Controller and I appended our signatures as witnesses to the Armistice. But following the signature we were delayed at the Polish Headquarters for some hours. I protested. I was told that it was impossible to go out or to penetrate the lines. Whether this was to enable the Group Commander to submit the terms of the Armistice to Korfanty for confirmation, or whether it was to instruct his outposts to make our return passage as difficult as possible, I did not discover.

But at four in the afternoon I embarked in a motor car to make the return journey to the German Headquarters. Over and over again in the course of this journey I was held up by mere children who demanded authority for my passage. There were endless delays, and finally at six in the evening, when near to Kreuzburg, an impish-looking boy, but possessed of a nice sense of humour, refused me any further passage and indicated that he would take possession of the motor car. At the point of the rifle I was ordered to alight, while he examined the Armistice. Neither the lad nor his companions could speak French and I possessed but a smattering of Polish. They retired with the document to a hut of branches erected by themselves and left me without escort for a moment on the road. I seized this opportunity to jump to the wheel of the car and to drive on amid a hail of ill-aimed bullets. We drove on and returned in safety to the German lines.

The German Commissioner received me very cordially. I picked up my chauffeur, and as I was departing the Commissioner reminded me again of my pledge to procure a British brigade. Towards midnight I arrived in Oppeln and immediately made my report at the Presidency and then returned to the British Commissioner.

He appeared to be pleased indeed with what I had achieved. Next morning while the Commission sat I was ordered to appear before it and to report. General Le Rond seemed much annoyed with what I had done, and I was told flatly that the presence of a British brigade was not desired and that this part of my promise could not be fulfilled. At the same time the atmosphere of British Headquarters changed towards me and I received orders to proceed at once as Assistant Kreis Controller in Pless, a district to which I could not take my wife and which was seething with revolt.

I was to be placed under the command of an official very much my junior, and the order was, in any case, a direct breach of the terms of my contract with the Foreign Office.

I immediately submitted my resignation and within twenty-four hours had packed up the whole of my furniture and possessions and was on my way home to England.

I reported at once in Downing Street. Among the officials at the Foreign Office I received the warmest reception. Later in the morning I was sent for to appear before Mr. Lloyd George in Downing Street. I was with him for some while, explaining

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transmis à tout les fronts dépendant de ce
groupe.

[Signature]

D.P.T.

comme Américain
militaire
Cap. A. D. D. D.

[Signature]
Comme Américain
Cap. A. D. D. D.

A SCRAP OF PAPER

The Armistice arranged and drawn up by the author between the German Defence Corps and the Polish insurgents, at Provonkau, 10/5/21. This Armistice was said to have prevented a war in Europe.

with a map precisely what had taken place, and I informed him also of my undertaking on the word of a British officer that a British brigade would be sent forthwith to restore order.

For years I had both followed and admired the dynamic personality and clarity of thought of the Prime Minister. My admiration for him was never greater than when I sat in the Strangers' Gallery in the House of Commons following my interview with him, and for two hours he explained to a packed House the intricate detail of the political and economic situation in Silesia. From all I had told him and from the mass of telegrams and dispatches he had taken out the essential points, relating one with another, and without a note, spread a map of Silesia before his audience, erecting upon it the arguments which for more than a year had been before the Commission. He marshalled his facts with the skill of a master mind ; and he concluded a most impressive oration by appealing for "Fair play."

I had resigned from the Diplomatic Service : but within a week a British brigade under the command of General Wauchope was already on its way to the occupation of Upper Silesia ; and within a month Colonel Percival, as the British Commissioner, had been replaced by General Sir William Heneker. Percival, a tired man, was rewarded with the knighthood of the Order of St. Michael and St. George. History will recognize the services which in the midst of diplomatic turmoil Percival rendered to his country.

My diplomatic career was at an end.

Someone told me that Fleet Street was the "Street of Adventure," so, with a packful of adventures, I went to Fleet Street to inquire whether therein there might be a possibility of further employment.

I very soon discovered that there were no salaried positions available. Though at the time I may have felt somewhat bitter that no employer was ready to hand me out a salary at four figures or thereabouts, I am perfectly convinced to-day that few men of initiative and brains deserve a salaried position at any figure at all. A paradox, perhaps, but nevertheless true.

It is clear that no greater injury was done to the minds of those serving in the fighting forces, known as ex-service men, than when Mr. Lloyd George employed the expression "A home

fit for heroes." He declines responsibility, but it seems to have been a child of his administration. And it may be remarked at the same time that no greater harm was done to the world than when President Wilson enunciated that the world was being "made safe for democracy." Ten years later, with democracy run riot, the world has been made safe, or unsafe, according to the attitude to these things, by the total suppression of democracy and by the rise of dictatorships in Russia, Italy, Spain, Poland, Brazil, Turkey, and almost so in Germany, Austria, and in Hungary. Incidentally those politically minded may note that these dictatorships are largely preserved and controlled by ex-service men.

But Lloyd George, perhaps designedly, deprived the fighting men of the initiative which four years of war had inculcated in them. "They had done their bit!" It is seldom in any meeting of ex-service men, or by chance if in sympathetic mood one may stop and converse with some poor devil sporting his medals on the pavement's edge and begging, that one does not hear that they or he "has done his bit." And ex-service men expected, and the politicians of the Armistice urged them to expect, that they would be spoon-fed for the rest of their lives and could live on charity.

To my mind it is a monstrous thing that the flower of a generation who survived and came from the crucible refined should have had their citizen senses dulled by the dope of having "done their bit." I myself was subject to such propaganda. And wherever I might go, I would meet men who but a year earlier had been commanding Battalions and Companies of Infantry, Batteries of Artillery, or Field Service Companies of Engineers, and with the exception of those who had had employment preserved for them during the war years, or whose fathers were rich enough to purchase them partnerships or to take them into their own businesses, these men were soured, sullen, hopelessly defeated by the peace. Thousands of them have scratched along somehow ever since, as half-commission touts on the Stock Exchange, as salesmen on commission alone for household appliances, or have gone bankrupt in the process of trying to run poultry farms and small-holdings.

The politicians made them useless by a propaganda of false promises.

I answered innumerable advertisements, sent out quires of printed testimonials. In two cases I was fortunate enough to be

granted an interview. In both of them the interview lasted not more than five minutes.

I possessed no commercial experience and was, of course, valueless. So when funds were exceedingly low, and after a holiday with my wife in Cornwall, I decided that with only twenty pounds left in the bank I had better find some regular employment, however menial the task might be.

I was fortunate indeed. One of the largest hotels in London, especially popular with American visitors and others from the Continent, desired a kind of super "lounge-lizard." I was super enough. The management required also someone of journalistic capacity to find news stories in the hotel and to send out puffs to the Press. They considered that an experience such as mine in the Intelligence Service would suffice, while my publications and contributions to magazines and journals demonstrated that my capacity to write was sufficiently ample. That in my early youth I had beaten the big drum was sufficient a testimonial that I could bang that of an hotel.

So I was installed in a converted bedroom which became my office, and I began to study the hotel. It possessed cellars which ran for miles, filled with the rarest vintages from Europe for heaven knows how many years. Sometimes I could sample these, so as to "tell the world" in a message clothed in appropriate language, what a lure were the cellars to the guests. The kitchens seemed to cover acres. The head chef in his own realm was greater than any of the rajahs whom I had met at the Durbar. He marshalled the meats like heavy artillery, sauces like squadrons of aerial scouts, fish like a frontal attack after a skirmish by the soup. Sweets were the cavalry which mopped up the enemy; while the head waiter upstairs, super diplomat, after signing the peace treaties, collected the indemnities.

The chef was a Field-Marshal, upstairs in the restaurants and cafés the *mâtres d'hôtel* were allied Field-Mmarshals, not always conducting their campaigns in complete harmony, though their objective, the guests, was always the same. There were acres of store-rooms, refrigerators, and washhouses. Above them more acres of dining-rooms, lounges, cocktail bars, reception bureaux, ballrooms, banqueting halls. And in this latter the wealth and fashion of London, indeed of the world, banqueted and danced, and when dancing rubbed shoulders with anyone who could pay for the privilege of dusting the powder from the arms of a duchess.

Above these rooms again were the offices of the supreme commander-in-chief, an Italian, who understood every phase of hotel business and everything that was expected to happen on every floor, and every unexpected thing which did happen, better perhaps than any man in Europe. For acres around his office and for more acres of three floors above it were bedrooms and bathrooms. Not only was it my business to know what was reserved in the wine cellars, what would be concocted in the kitchens, who danced and dined in the foyers ; but I had also to know what happened in the bedrooms and in the bathrooms. I did know. All kinds of very curious things went on in that hotel ; but on its staff were two highly experienced detectives, while the C.I.D. was very well informed as to who went in and out from that hotel.

And if there were no news stories available, I discovered that I must create news.

A famous *prima donna* arrived as a guest. I arranged that the budding young poets of England should arrive in her room, bearing verse dedicated to her and a chaplet of bay leaves. The Press photographer was waiting and the journalists were waiting too. So the Press reported that the solemn ceremony, as a historic occasion, had taken place at this hotel.

The same *prima donna* elected, for a considerable fee, to be the principal draw at the hotel's Christmas festivities. She dined at a raised table in the centre of the restaurant and from this dais sang to the guests after dinner. Finally, in a welter of passion and sobs, she delivered herself of a Milanese song, after the guests had retired to the ballroom, to crowds of Italian waiters and kitchen staff who surged around the platform upon which she stood.

The grill-room was not doing very brisk business. It needed a new carpet, though I do not suggest that this was the reason why there was an absence of luncheon parties. What I believe was the largest carpet ever previously manufactured in England, a green affair with yellow splodges, rather like poached eggs on spinach, was made, and, rolled as a telescope, was hoisted at the factory gates on to two of those wagons used in rural districts for transporting felled trees. We drove this past one of the most crowded traffic centres in the Metropolis, just after the luncheon hour, when the streets were thronged with idlers and the traffic of all kinds was at the height of its burden. Everything was held up for twenty minutes ; and the new carpet for the grill-room

received all the publicity of which it was capable, while the curious in their hundreds came to see it when it was laid. And they remained to lunch.

I discovered unknown cheeses from the most remote valleys of Central Europe, and these were sent by aeroplane to Croydon to be served in the hotel. Gourmets flocked to view the sensation, and pressmen solemnly sampled the cheese. More new stories.

On St. Andrew's Day, for the first time in the history of this hotel, I suggested a bumper feast. The story went that the haggis from the Highland wilderness beyond Inverness had been despatched to the head chef in the kitchen. Some storeman had received it. Never having seen a haggis before, and judging from its appearance that it was soap, he passed it on to the laundry associated with the hotel. But back it came on the great night. So eagerly did the Press respond to this story, as it always does, since many journalists are Scotsmen, that one of the leading daily newspapers in Scotland produced a leading article denouncing England's insult to Scotland.

Then there was the question of "eating to music." This hotel possessed two of the most famous orchestras in Britain, under the leadership of two men of international reputation. I persuaded a very eminent physician, whose capacity as a musician is almost equal to his skill in medicine, to dine in the restaurant, having suggested first a musical programme to be played by the string orchestra in conjunction with a menu specially prescribed. The conception, of course, one founded upon psychological and physiological truths, was that, for example, to consume *pâté de foie gras* to Wagner was for the cultured an epicurean impossibility, while for others of less distinction in taste, the effect on the nervous system would be to produce indigestion.

Strauss with his mellow Viennese waltzes was the thing with *hors d'œuvre*. Soup could be dashed down with a rollicking sea shanty, while roast beef required a military march or something sedate and pompous selected from Gilbert and Sullivan.

So the feast started with an appetizer, both in food and music, then warmed the heart and the interior with hot soup and naval melody. The entrée required something light and soothing from the French composers, and then the joint was accompanied by the full flood of Edward German's rich orchestration. We galloped through a game course to Beethoven's Scottish symphony, and while the boiling chocolate of an *omelette surprise* melted the ice on its exterior in yellow vanilla cascades, the

orchestra flung itself into the wildest ecstasy while the *Chef d'orchestre* pirouetted with his violin among the tables. The wine, too, was harmonized to the proceedings ; and while the eminent physician discoursed learnedly upon the gastric system and upon music, journalists with eager ears made hasty notes between the courses of his learned opinions. A leading London daily commenced a controversy on the subject and for a week " dining to music " was the topic of the hour.

Then came the idea of the Brighter London Society, but I think the details as to its objective had better be left unsaid. At least it had the effect of making the licensing authorities a little more careful that public-houses would not be closed in one borough at ten in the evening, while in another borough on the opposite side of the road they were open until eleven, an absurd anomaly, to which the Society, among other things, drew public attention.

But my sojourn in the hotel was not all champagne and cigars, neither of which, as a matter of fact, have ever made any appeal to my interior economy. I was prodded too often in the back by an elbow, being peremptorily ordered to communicate with so-and-so by telephone.

So that although my hours of labour were between the hours of nine in the morning, and usually ten to two or three the following morning, with Sundays included, I found some moments to paint a series of posters for a tobacco combine. In due course these were sold ; and then for the first time I heard that these matters were handled by Advertising Agencies.

I was instantly curious ; and made inquiries in the " Street of Adventure," among byways hitherto unknown to me. So far my activities had concerned themselves alone with the editorial side of the Press, and I discovered that it had another side, perhaps greater, for from it proceeds the revenue upon which alone newspapers can exist from day to day. Though the Editor's chair knows not the office of the Advertising Manager, in the conduct of the policy of a newspaper there must be an essential alliance.

CHAPTER XIX

MANY AFFAIRS

Rapprochement with Germany—The Genoa Conference—Oil—Britons and Germans meet at my dinner table—Views of German industrialists—International Fashion Fair—Advertising Agency—Building a Business—Liberalism.

BUT throughout all these months of busyness, my mind never ceased to fidget with the problems provoked by European diplomacy and the upheaval of the War. I desired most ardently co-operation, political, industrial, and social, between the British people and those of Germany. To seal the peace in political form appeared to be the only possible objective if European peace was to be preserved, except by armament, for more than a few years. I wrote, therefore, to my friend Geheimrat von Moltke, making the suggestion that the German people should again make themselves familiar to the new generations of the British Isles.

Some weeks later I received a letter from Herr Dufour-Feronce, the Councillor to the German Embassy in London. He came to call upon me in my flat near Baker Street. Dufour-Feronce, usually known by his former unhyphenated name, was a newcomer to German Diplomacy. He had been educated at Dulwich College, and all his career had been a prominent dye manufacturer in Leipzig, and subsequently Burgomaster of this great industrial city. Dufour was about fifty years of age, whose only son, an adopted one, had been killed on the Western Front. He was a man of wide sympathy and understanding, devoted to Anglo-German friendship. He served as Councillor to the German Embassy in London for ten years, resolving after the War to throw his business interests to the four winds and to devote the remainder of his life to the resuscitation of goodwill between his own country and that of his early youth. No one who met Dufour, whether officially or otherwise, had anything but affection for his personality and implicit trust in his word. At

the Genoa Conference Mr. Lloyd George said to me, "The one man I trust is Dufour-Feronce."

The campaign for appeasement commenced. It enlisted to its service many Members of Parliament of all parties, some of them since of Cabinet rank, who for varied reasons subscribed to its general theme.

I went out to the Genoa Conference, the second of those great International Conferences arranged by Mr. Lloyd George from which so much was hoped by economists, but from which, with the exception of a few pious resolutions, so little emerged.

I am perfectly convinced that much might have come from Genoa had it not been for a repetition by the French of methods similar to those which they employed in the Silesian Diplomacy. The French would concede nothing. While Great Britain especially, but also Italy, Germany, and the other Powers, were willing to make great concessions, the French had nothing whatever to offer to the world.

I met everyone of interest at this Conference, the Cabinet Ministers, Chancellors, bankers, commercial magnates. Above them all towered the dynamic personality of Mr. Lloyd George. Of the foreigners, those who impressed me most were Dr. Rathenau, Jew industrialist, philosopher, musician, supreme head of the German State with the exception of its President. I was privileged to two private interviews with Dr. Rathenau and I was deeply impressed by his personality and by his obvious sincerity. Monsieur Jaspar, the Foreign Secretary of Belgium, too, was an attractive personality, as was Eduard Benes, the Prime Minister of Czecho-Slovakia.

But the most interesting personalities at this Conference were those of the Bolshevik representatives, who segregated themselves apart at Rapallo, but were the fulcrum of intrigue. I met M. Krassin several times in private interview. He impressed me with his drive, capacity, and business ability. Here was no political theorist, but a realist; and if the Conference had dealt alone with him, I believe that in Russian affairs much might have come from it.

But in the background was always the immaculate Chicherine. Neither Chicherine nor Rakowski were willing to budge by one letter from the formula of their conception of a Communist Paradise. Nor would they yield in any way to meet the social and economic understandings, prejudices, and customs of the West. With a picture of the "toughs" in England howling for

a Soviet of the Russian pattern, I would have liked to present to them Chicherine in his faultless evening dress and starched white waistcoat !

But the Bolsheviks were assiduously courted by both European interests and those of America with the object of acquiring for their own states the oil concessions in the Caucasus.

In these negotiations there emerged the personality of Colonel H. F. Boyle, popularly known as "Klondyke Boyle." I saw this rugged Canadian every day. He was already a sick man and still suffering from the effects of his war wounds of eighteen machine-gun bullets through his skin. But no man enjoyed the confidence and respect of the Bolsheviks more than did Boyle, for in Rumania, by the strength of his own personality alone, he had defeated Soviet aggression. Boyle represented the Anglo-Dutch oil interests. But British interests in these negotiations were sharply divided, and while Boyle sought a contract on behalf of Anglo-Dutch, Sir Henry Greenway and Mr. Urquart were endeavouring to secure them for the Shell and Standard groups. Boyle proposed a committee of Lord Cowdray, Greenway, and himself under the chairmanship of Lord Long, then First Lord of the Admiralty, to co-operate in the interests of Great Britain ; but nothing came of it.

The most extraordinary situation was created in Genoa and throughout Europe generally by the attitude of *The Times* towards Mr. Lloyd George. Lord Northcliffe, who had at that time acquired *The Times*, threw the whole weight of its immense influence into a vendetta against the Prime Minister. The editor of *The Times* himself had his abode at the headquarters of the French Delegation.

One day I asked the opinion on this subject of Sir Arthur Shirley Benn, who represented the Associated Chambers of Commerce. He said to me, "When Lloyd George was sent as the British Delegate, it was the duty of the British nation to support him. I do not agree with the politics of Lloyd George in their entirety, but here in Genoa I support him. *The Times* has wrought a great disservice to our country by its repeated attempts to discredit the Prime Minister and to tie his hands. This is the more dangerous in view of the fact that *The Times* still holds first place on the Continent, and Lloyd George's position has been weakened. Every business interest represented, officially and unofficially, shares this view."

I seized the opportunity at Genoa to serve the campaign

which now had become the chief momentum of my life. I suggested a dinner between the British commercial interests and those of Germany. I found such a proposal very favourable to the Secretary to the Department of Overseas Trade, Sir Philip Lloyd Graeme (afterwards Cunliffe Lister). I put this proposal then to Dufour-Feronce. He was equally enthusiastic.

So I gave a dinner party, the first meeting after the War between British and German commercial interests. Those who attended this party were Lloyd Graeme; Sir Arthur Shirley Benn, representing the Associated Chambers of Commerce; Colonel O. C. Armstrong, the Chairman of the Federation of British Industries; Herr Dufour-Feronce, the Councillor to the German Embassy in London; Herr Deutsch, the Chairman and Managing Director of the Allgemeine Electricische Gesellschaft, the famous A.E.G. of which Rathenau was the President and his father the founder; and finally Dr. Bucher, a young man of exceptional brilliance, a Civil Servant not of the old school, who had risen to position through the vortex of the revolution, and was Economic and Commercial Advisor to the German Embassy in London.

Each of the men at this dinner in his own sphere was remarkable. Lloyd Graeme, already an Under Secretary: Shirley Benn, benign, solid, respected in the life of the City and in the House of Commons: Armstrong, little known publicly, but possessing a remarkable gift in languages, speaking fluently and easily in German, Italian, or French: Deutsch, a short, thick-set Jew, his physiognomy much like that of Rathenau, and who was in himself the whole dynamic of the A.E.G.: Dufour, a master of industry, and perhaps the only man who from within all Germany could have piloted his fatherland into the port of English friendship; and finally the versatile Bucher, who during the War had made the food supplies in Turkey go farther; and as one of his ingenious schemes had built many miles of zinc wall, with pits beneath them, to catch and trap the locust swarms, and had been highly successful by this means in countering the pest. On the fall of Dr. Simons, after his London visit in 1921, Bucher was appointed to succeed him in his high office in Berlin. Lastly there was myself.

The conversation ranged over labour, wages, hours, massed production, industrial conditions, transport, waterways, Russia, coal, credits, tariffs.

Herr Deutsch, who knew Russia inside out, opened the con-

versation with a deliberate exposition of the case of Russia and of Germany. He pointed to the millions of peasant inhabitants demanding clothing, boots, and all the necessities of life from Western Europe. He explained that the Allies had no right to be angry that Germany had concluded with Russia the Treaty of Rapallo, by showing that Germany had been preparing for this step for many months. Dr. Bucher demonstrated that his Department, the Chambers of Commerce, had months earlier sent experts to examine the economic and political conditions in Russia. Each expert had returned with a similar report, namely that it was necessary to recognize the Russian Government *de jure*, before it was possible to enter into trade relations. Herr Deutsch insisted upon the essential interdependence of Russia and Germany. Hence the Russo-German agreement, brought to a head at Genoa by indefinite statements and intrigues threatening to leave Germany isolated. Both Shirley Benn and Armstrong agreed with Herr Deutsch that it was necessary to reopen Germany and Russia together. Dr. Bucher said, "French interests in Russia have only the bones of the Czarist Government, not Russian industry."

The whole question of the policy of Germany's entry into the League was discussed. The Germans persisted that this was impossible except under pressure and especially in view of the growing strength of the Petite Entente with its French bias. We all agreed, and with much gravity, that if the Conference failed it could only fail by French action. Only the previous day Lloyd George had taken tea with Dufour and had sketched the seriousness of the position should France, as she threatened, take things into her own hands and withdraw from the Conference, at the same time occupying the Ruhr with a further advance across the Rhine. Lloyd George had insisted that the French peasants must be informed of the true situation.

It was clear to all these minds that even though a further European War might be postponed by lack of both finance and armament, France was steadily arming herself in direct opposition to the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, and that the suppression of Germany only threw her peoples into the arms of their unnatural lover Russia.

In contemplating any such further war it was as obvious then as it is to-day that France, with the Petite Entente, to which has been added Poland, will fight against Germany, thrown into an alliance with Russia. It is equally clear that in any such war,

unless Mussolin receives great concessions from France in Northern Africa, he will throw in the weight of Italy on the side of Germany. As to what part Britain will be asked to play, I dared not think and still am unwilling to say. But it is as clear in this age as it was eight years ago that the British public must be informed through the mouths of those of her public men who understand international affairs.

One thing is sure, that neither France nor Belgium will be the cockpit of such a war. Germany is faced with the havoc on her own territory; a cynic may perhaps observe in just retribution that France may be revenged and bring down all civilization about her.

Though since the War I have never ceased to urge that Germany must be brought within the comity of world nations, I have not been blind to her faults. There is much virtue in young Germany, evidence of a spiritual revival. But older Germany has scarcely departed from its former sins, though it may have gained from the War some wisdom in their commission. Germany sometimes behaves as a naughty child, but not from any innocence of heart. The Treaty of Rapallo and the recent Austro-German Customs Union pact shocked the diplomatic world, not so much by their provisions as by the method adopted. One observes the same defiance, the same aggressive spirit. Yet, when rebuked, political Germany cries her innocence aloud to the world, and engages in a thorough-paced orgy of propaganda. The injustice of the Treaty is hung at the mast-head and the world's attention engaged again in the Polish question. European political orientation makes it plain that those who love peace must continue to watch both Germany and Russia. How wise, indeed, was an Exhibition of Persian Art.

Throughout these pages I have ventured on no prophecy, for they are a record of a man's activity. But I will state quite definitely that should, from the present European political orientation, a war develop, France will secure victory at first. But in the end Germany will win, and this will spell the final extinction of France in Europe.

I can foresee no possibility of change of heart or method in French affairs, with a prosperous population wholly subservient to Poincaré and the *Comité des Forges*.

Diplomacy will fail in its objective, as it failed before, if British statesmen do not address France publicly, as a judge might an erring wife. British friendship with France is wholly valueless,

except it be supported from the French side. And yet I love France and the French with all my heart.

Returning from Genoa I opened an office in the heart of the City in Copthall Avenue, and from this strategic position commenced to send to the Press definite information from a number of unprejudiced correspondents of high repute whom I had chosen throughout Central Eastern Europe.

I became associated in the conduct of this news service with Mr. S. L. Bensusan, a quiet, erudite man, an authority upon agriculture, Morocco, Spain, and a brilliant journalist who had formerly been editor of the *Jewish World*. Bensusan was a Jew, an active member of the Theosophical Society, to which he introduced me.

My other colleague in the conduct of this service was Mr. Sidney Walton, perhaps the foremost publicist of his day in Britain, and a man who has been concerned in the background with many of the larger movements of industrial enterprise during the past ten years. Most of Walton's activities were concerned in the extending field of advertising, and from him I acquired a considerable knowledge of both commerce and of the selling of goods and commodities.

It was at this time that the *Daily Mirror* was seeking for someone to organize and direct its projected International Fashion Fair. Hearing of this, and imagining that I possessed a flair for showmanship, together with an expert knowledge of Europe, I suggested that I was suitable for this task, possessed the requisite knowledge, and might therefore be entrusted with it. I was selected. Lord Rothermere after a shrewd cross-examination was both kind and generous.

I visualized an exhibition unlike anything which had been held in this country, I believe also in any other part of the world.

The exhibition was designed to be lighted throughout by artificial light. I did not permit those who were to occupy its stands to have freedom in their erection, but all the exhibitors were forced to subscribe to a general scheme of decoration, consisting of alley-ways, designed like those of the *Arabian Nights*, the top of each one of which was illuminated under domes and minarets of coloured canvas erected on wires, and culminating in the great Temple of Fashion.

The Temple of Fashion itself was a stage before which hung curtains, eighty feet high, of cloth-of-gold, upon whose sheen were thrown ever-changing coloured lights, and the centre of

which opened to display a stairway with golden gates through which passed the mannequins exhibiting the creations of the greatest and most exclusive dress designers in Europe.

I engaged an eccentric artist, the Marquis de Tournay d'Oisy, to carry out my artistic conception, which he completed inside a disused chapel in St. John's Wood, while the *mise-en-scène* I entrusted to the hands of Campbell-Taylor and Aubrey Hammond. I then engaged a staff to canvass "the hundred best houses in Europe." None of those who exhibited from the Continent had ever shown previously and have never shown since.

From Paris I secured *couturières* of international fame, Callot Soeurs, Madeleine, A la Reine d'Angleterre, Paul Caret, Dœuillet, Cheruit, among others; the London houses not only supported the Fair magnificently but traded also with high success.

From Italy came Gallenga, the Florentine House whose studios reproduce on velvet and silks the historic designs of the old Italian masters, studios which have clothed queens and princesses, duchesses, and a world's aristocracy for countless years.

There were perfumers and furriers, beauty specialists, and adorners of the hair, decorators, craftsmen, weavers, while among the mannequins was a royal lady, Princess Maria Bariatinsky.

By the combined efforts of exhibitors and organizers, Holland Park Hall, now the headquarters of Austin Motors, was transformed into a Temple of Venus, or at least a shrine at which was seen all the wonderful and intimate things that help to make Venus more beautiful. It is an oft-quoted proverb that it is impossible to "paint the lily" or to "gild the rose"; but the artists who were responsible for all these adornments of women showed that they could produce enhancements of the charms of even the most beautiful.

As a setting to the production, before the mannequin displays, which took place both in the afternoon and the evening, I wrote and staged an introduction, in which was featured Dame Fashion, in a dress which I specially designed for the occasion. Her entry was made behind a youth attired as a Greek herald, who blew a fanfare upon his trumpet. His name was Forbes and this was his first stage presentation. To-day he is one of the first stars in Hollywood. On either side of the gates of the Temple were stationed its Guardians attired in the costumes of those of Tut-Ankh-Amen's Tomb at Luxor. These were two immense



MISS MARIE TEMPEST OPENS THE *DAILY MIRROR* INTERNATIONAL FASHION FAIR, 1923, ORGANIZED AND DIRECTED BY THE AUTHOR

Senegalese great bronze statues carrying fans made of gold and ostrich feathers, cunningly contrived so that their centres lighted and illumined the names of those of the houses which, one after the other, were showing their creations.

The cast included twelve Quaker girls ; and a poem which I wrote for the occasion was delivered by Miss Betty Sprinck, appearing as Dame Fashion.

I think the very first comedy to which my mother took me was entitled "The Marriage of Kitty." Then I was only a boy, and Marie Tempest at the peak of her fame. On the top of that mountain, acclaimed and loved by all, she has remained. This charming little lady came to open my Fashion Fair, just as sweet as I remember her playing the lead twenty years before.

All fashionable London came to this Fair. Quite obviously it was impossible to present each of the houses participating upon every occasion, and my life for three weeks became a nightmare of angry, jealous, petulant women, both exhibitors and mannequins. Some of the latter were of astonishing beauty and of equally astonishing ill-temper. Just prior to their entry, when being marshalled behind the gold curtains, they would call an individual, or mass, lightning strike and could not be persuaded until filled with champagne to advance down the long platform constructed down the centre of the hall. Sometimes the champagne overcame them, and then I would persuade amateurs to take their place. Miss Godley, the daughter of one of the directors of the *Daily Mirror*, frequently accepted these services. And I remember that following the birth of a first grandson to His Majesty, an enterprising house desired to show a marvellous bridal costume and thereafter the happy mother, perambulator and baby complete. Miss Godley played both these parts, except the baby, to perfection, while those in the know, behind the curtain, more than enjoyed the jest.

The Fashion Fair was great fun. The Press wrote of it in extravagant praise. "The planning and organization of the *Daily Mirror* Fashion Fair has served to show a fresh genius at work in the World of Exhibitions. Lieut.-Colonel G. S. Hutchison has transformed the Holland Park Hall into what is most probably the most attractive and artistically arranged exhibition that London has ever seen. Those who have worked with him know what colossal organizing ability is crowded into his young frame. He has supervised practically every detail of the wonderful 'lay-out' of the Fair, and even the beautiful decorative scheme

on the walls has been adapted from Colonel Hutchison's photographs of what is, perhaps, the finest example of a sixteenth-century Venetian palace."

This palace, it may be remarked, was that of ancient Krakow. Strange that this example of Italian art should be situated among the tortuous, poverty-stricken streets of a Galician city.

Before the opening of the Fashion Fair, by chance I met in London an aggressively energetic young man. He had been my Adjutant during the War, Major George Harrison. We exchanged a few words on our mutual activities. Harrison had, as he told me, on the strength of a recommendation which I had given him, been appointed as Secretary to the London Press Exchange, then emerging from the difficulty of the war period, under the direction of a master brain and charming personality, Reginald Sykes. There was a meeting between Harrison, Sykes, and myself. Within a few hours an agreement had been drawn up between us and I became the City Director of the London Press Exchange, with larger offices and a much wider horizon of activity.

From that moment I had become an Advertising Agent.

To-day, very largely owing to the almost superhuman energy of Harrison and his unflagging labour, due as much to his genius for finance and his quick understanding and perception of industrial and commercial problems, the London Press Exchange has grown to be the largest and most important advertising organization in this country, with ramifications throughout the world. Harrison has recruited to its staff artistic and literary genius, economists and market investigators, and from the small staff in which I knew it, the annual wage bill now runs into many tens of thousands, while its turnover exceeds millions sterling.

I spent three years as an Executive and as a Director of the Associated Companies of the London Press Exchange, and during that time was engaged upon some of the largest and most far-reaching marketing and advertising campaigns in the world, that of Kodak, Kruschen Salts, the British Commercial Gas Association, the Imperial Tobacco Company, Glaxovo, Steinway. I know of no activity in human affairs which demands more of a man than does that of Advertising Agency practice.

I was in close touch and conference with most of the figures in the advertising world, in agency practice, as directors of newspapers and journals, and as business executives. But I had not relinquished an earlier interest in political affairs. Indeed, though the

London Press Exchange completely absorbed my time and energy, I was already committed too far, and had been adopted as Liberal Candidate for the Uxbridge Division.

I had made it clear from the beginning that I was not particularly wedded to the Liberal programme, though the philosophy of Liberalism was wholly mine. But in my Candidature I devoted myself to the case for a revision of the Treaty of Versailles. I propounded, also, a scheme, wholly new, for the Standardization of the Accounting System, together with the Publication of Accounts, and one of National Industrial Insurance.

What I stated in brief was that it should be realized that most of the ills from which we suffer in the body politic have their source in the minds of our own citizens, due to ignorance, prejudice, fear of the unknown, anxiety and hallucinations, the fruit of post-war years.

To take the last first. A comprehensive scheme of industrial insurance on a national basis would ensure the worker in whatever craft or establishment he be engaged against adverse trade cycles, and reckless or foolish financial policy or bad administration. Such a policy would give him security in the home.

To standardize the accounting system, and to teach Elementary and Secondary-school children to read a simple profit-and-loss account, would enable all workers to understand the economics of the whole industry in which they are engaged, and of the workshop, factory, or office in whose activities they participate. They would appreciate at once the varying charges of labour, taxation, rent, fuel, freight, purchase of raw material and other cognate matters. They could, not only by their own economies within industry and the workshop, secure its higher prosperity, but could understand also the relative charges and rewards for the hire of capital. Such a measure, taken in conjunction with an Act making it compulsory to publish accounts, would serve two great issues. The first, the fact that the workers, from the lips of agitators, are led to believe that "the wicked capitalist gets the better of him every time," whereas in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the industrialist and manufacturer is a man of humane sympathy, proud of his works and product.

On the other hand, such a measure would serve as a definite check upon the greedy and rapacious employer who sought to depress wages in order to extract an unfair rate of profit as the reward for capital and for himself.

Neither of these two measures, which go to the very heart of

industrial disease because they take into account the psychology and point of view of both employer and employee, has been welcomed by any of the political pundits. On the one hand there are few who desire to share profits with the worker, and on the other the Socialist conception is opposed theoretically to the idea of profit at all.

But everywhere I preached this thesis, it was received with enthusiasm. And I see to-day as clearly as I did in 1924 that unless there occur great social and economic changes the Treaty of Versailles itself has provided all the causes for fresh European wars. Indeed we are on the very threshold of new convulsions.

When I spoke in terms of British trade, and as a Briton who had served his country, in favour of the restoration of Anglo-German friendship, at one meeting in Uxbridge some greybeards and hot-headed ignorant youths shouted the suggestion that I ought to be thrown in the river. But ten years later public men and the Press, Foreign Secretaries of all Parties, industrialists, bankers and traders are almost unanimous in their approval of the policy which I had then enunciated.

My election address, a document much longer than is usual, set out the following :

"Since an early age I have had a passion for Liberalism, which I define in the words of Morley as 'the substitution of justice for injustice in the affairs of state'; and through my career I have devoted my best effort towards the amelioration of the lot of those who, by reason of birth and environment, through no fault of their own, are forced to spend their lives faced always with anxiety, having few and unsatisfying pleasures, and are denied the refreshment of real recreation, of culture, and of home life. I approach Liberalism from the philosophic standpoint; and whilst appreciating its moral and spiritual force, I am equally conscious of the material benefits which Liberal policy has given, and will give, to the people of this country, and, I should add, internationally. But I will not permit my sympathy to dominate intelligence and common sense.

"Liberalism favours the removal of those artificial social barriers which deny equality of opportunity to the children of the mass of the people of the country, as compared with that given almost exclusively to a privileged few. Lack of vision and selfishness have reserved higher education and culture as the monopoly of a privileged class. There being no class monopoly of brains and ability these latter in the national interest must be

given equality of opportunity. Such opportunity concerns itself not only with the matter of education itself, but also with that of nutrition, housing, and environment. We should acquaint ourselves with the educational system of Scotland and of other countries.

"I believe that children are a national asset of the highest possible value, and that ethics apart, and from a purely utilitarian standpoint, it is good business to train and make use of the best of the whole youth of our country, for upon this our industrial supremacy ultimately rests. The policy of the Conservative Party, intent upon preserving privilege, is definitely opposed to this principle. Liberalism has an abhorrence of the socialistic state when family life becomes a matter of public management, for the ideal domestic circle is the home, the nursery of all virtues. In the children of the masses is bared to our view the soul of the people before it is tortured out of recognition.

"Liberalism recognizes that legislation and reform can only spring from the moral and spiritual development of the individual; Liberalism is prepared to give abundantly to the people in accordance with the demand stimulated by such development; whilst Conservatives will defend social privilege and will only grant reforms under revolutionary threat; nor can the imposition of mere legislation on the Socialist principle raise the standard of life and culture of the people.

"Liberalism prefers that the individual should have the right to choose the paths of good or of evil; and it insists that only upon this principle can the State be developed. The bond between Liberalism and the people shall be love or it shall be nothing. And by love I mean the impulse that makes for greater life, greater joy and freedom, and greater sincerity. Founded upon such love, Liberalism will so scientifically apply its legislation that the children's battles will be fought until the economic position is forced by the sheer pressure of youth at its doors.

"The re-framing of the Treaty, which has steadily been driving Europe to bankruptcy, not only financial, but in health and morality, is fundamental to the solution of the great problem of unemployment. Europe requires economic stability, and Great Britain, as a manufacturing country, must have her foreign markets. It is yet to be hoped that continued Liberal pressure has at last made this plain to the Conservative Party, and that the present Government will have the good sense to settle once and for ever the question of Reparations. The essential in business

is confidence, and the re-framing of the Treaty in the terms of equality, justice, clemency, and goodwill will be the first measure to promote that confidence in which atmosphere alone it is possible to conduct business.

"Great Britain with a vast and increasing population, depends for her lifeblood upon her foreign markets. Markets we must have before any other necessary palliatives are introduced, calculated to govern that other problem of occasional unemployment, due to trade depression or to the introduction of labour-saving machinery in a particular craft."

But this policy was not that of the Liberal Party.

I entered into the field almost unknown in the district ; and had the campaign lasted longer, there is considerable possibility for believing that for the first time in the history of the Uxbridge constituency, always Conservative, a Liberal would have been elected to Parliament. As it was, my poll was but a bare one thousand votes behind Commander Burney. On several occasions since, deputations and persons from each of the three political Parties have approached me with a view to enlisting my Candidature. But, holding the view that democratic government on its present basis has outrun its usefulness, and that no man without making concession to his conscience or to his common sense can serve a Party, I have resisted what might have proved a dominating interest.

Moreover, I had no desire whatever to be a voting machine in the House of Commons, to participate in meaningless debates, seldom even reported in the Press, or to waste my time in the Lobbies of the House of Commons. These Lobbies may be suitable places for company promoters, trade-union secretaries, paragraphists and the writers of gossip, and lawyers looking for briefs ; but I am perfectly positive that a month of House of Commons life would drive me to the depths of despair and exasperation. One observes nothing but endless Royal Commissions which achieve nothing ; endless conferences out of which nothing practical proceeds ; endless talk where a man of action would say, "This will I do."

Liberalism stands for the sovereignty of the individual. I believe that in the political field, Liberalism, though not the present Party, will again recover its appeal when it addresses itself to the sentiment of the nation in its love of personal liberty. The price of liberty is eternal vigilance. The work of Liberalism is not yet done.

CHAPTER XX

ADVENTURES IN ADVERTISING

New York—The Advertising Convention—Carolina—The ceremony of a "Barbecue"—Americans—Business—Democracy.

I RETURNED to my work in the London Press Exchange, but in no chastened mood ; and shortly afterwards, as a member of the Delegation of British Business Men to the U.S.A., went on a voyage of discovery.

The first purpose of our mission was to secure for London, at the first year of the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, the International Convention of Advertising. Mass production in America had established advertising as one of the principal and most important functions in trade. We, engaged in the advertising business, covering the whole field of marketing, merchandising, and distribution, realized that what America was doing was the need of the older-established industries of Great Britain.

To advertise is to make known. The World War had found us with a declining export trade, the very lifeblood of the peoples of these Islands. Without "making known" it was sheer futility either to employ British capital in British industry, or to produce goods, however good, for which there was no market. We went to America to learn. But we went also to bring to London, to Wembley, the business executives, industrial leaders, publicists and buyers of the world, so that at Wembley they could learn what the greatest Empire in history could produce.

We sailed in the giant Cunarder, the *Berengaria*. Almost before we stepped from her decks at New York Harbour we were being hurried in motor cars to a banquet, the largest ever given in New York, to four thousand persons. Though Prohibition reigned, under each table were cunningly hidden bottles of champagne and whisky. These good New-Yorkers thought that they could not receive their British guests without the libations of the Motherland.

From New York, after a hurricane tour of the city, and being

whirled and hurled up and down the elevators of the Woolworth Building and the Pennsylvania Hotel, we were hurried to Atlantic City. This playground, looking out across the wide blue seas of the Atlantic, beggars all description to an English reader. Its piers are labelled "The Million Dollar Pier," "The Two Million Dollar Pier," and there are many of them. They serve no purpose for shipping, but upon their boards can be found every kind of entertainment, foolery, romance, and stupidity. Despite Prohibition the bars were doing a roaring trade, while, as I was told, the Sheriff and the Police collected commissions from the bar tenders for such lawful permission.

Evelyn Thaw, the heroine of New York's murder sensation, controlled a dancing palace, and it was but one of hundreds which blared forth their jazz music right round the clock of night. I was pursued by photographers, cinematograph operators, vendors of postcards, iced drinks, illicit literature, and hawkers of every kind.

We attended the Great Conference Hall, and various of us, numerous sub-sections of the Conference. "Bill" Crawford, spell-binder, held the vast audience of the Conference in his grip, while he talked of the English rose, and in his fingers held aloft an imaginary torch of progress. "We have a torch," he declared, again "a torch," again "a torch." He sought his notes, but these had been grabbed from the table by one of the reporters, and on this note we voted, and the torch carried the Convention to London.

I found myself, one morning, in the Community Advertising Department. When I went in I possessed not the foggiest idea of what "community advertising" meant. But I made a speech. It really did not matter what it was about, but it was filled with fine elocution and was urgent of the Wembley mission. Solemnly I was elected First President of the Community Advertising Department, whose function was to boost cities and pleasure resorts. No speech was ever more appropriate than mine, showing Wembley as the Mecca of the wise, the acquisitive, the curious, and the get-rich-quick.

Those who attended this Convention were a queer collection, go-getters, a hundred per cent boosters, serious business executives, judges of the American High Court, spell-binding clergy, uplifters, account-hunters, propagandists, politicians, in fact everyone who hoped to grind an axe on the stone of public opinion.

From Atlantic City I returned to New York, visiting a host

of friends whom I had made during the period of the Convention. I dined with General Faison, who had commanded the 30th American Division with which I had been so closely associated during the War.

Already I had received many telegrams and letters asking me to go to Carolina and revisit my American comrades-in-arms. With Jimmy Sykes, the son of my Chairman, a gay, intellectual, and literary youth, not yet twenty-one, I journeyed south to Goldsboro, where dwelt Major Wentworth Pierce, who had commanded the Machine-Gun Battalion of that Division.

As the train steamed into the station of this Carolina town, huge broad sheets greeted my eyes—"Colonel Hutchison, hero of Ypres, here. Guest, Major Pierce." That said it! I needed no further introduction to that hospitable town. The National Guard was on the platform to greet me with salutes and I was whirled away to the house of Major Pierce, off Main Street.

At that time I was an Honorary Member of the Thirty Club of Great Britain. My friend, who possessed an unbounded admiration for English institutions, not excluding the club life of St. James, imagined that I was a member of thirty different clubs. This conception of my social importance added tremendously to my stature in his eyes. As we walked down Main Street he would hail his friends, "Hey! Mr. Sheriff, let me introduce you. This is my friend Colonel Hutchison. He is a great man, he is. He is a member of thirty social clubs!" And so it quickly went around the town that a great social constellation had descended to illumine this small township, and I was immediately made a honorary member of every club and organization, with the exception of one. This one was the Klu Klux Klan, at this period at the very height, if I may say so, of its fury. But though this privilege was not extended to me, I did not go without a demonstration.

The night following my arrival, thousands of motor cars from the outlying districts came into Goldsboro. Gentlemen sheeted in white, on their heads huge conical hats slitted with eyepieces, in hundreds solemnly processed through Main Street. On a motor car in the centre of the procession was an enormous illumined red cross, and there were several bands which kept, I believe for my benefit, the marchers more or less in step. The procession took well over an hour to pass, and then we all processed to an open meadow, where the "Klanners," within a carefully kept circle, exercised themselves in varied ceremonial.

The following day I inspected the National Guard, the standing Militia Force of the United States. In Goldsboro this force consisted of a battery of artillery. By what authority I made this inspection I do not know, but I carried it out with such dignity as I could assemble, wearing a panama hat of American pattern, which I considered gave me an extraordinarily ludicrous appearance as I took the salute.

None of the organizations to which I belonged would release me without its fête of welcome and a speech. I dined with the Rotary Club, and twice preached from the pulpit, once in the Reformed Church, and again in that of the Presbyterians. The inhabitants of Goldsboro were fully determined that as a Scot I should not be without the joys usually associated with the Scottish race. I was, therefore, not only adopted by the Presbyterians, although permitted to preach to those of less strait-laced principles, but a number of the inhabitants seemed to spend much of their time disappearing into the woods to illicit stills with the object of manufacturing rye-whisky for my consumption. This whisky was terrible stuff, of a potency entirely beyond my possible endurance. I was expected at every moment of day or night to have wearied and to need such stimulation. If I had not found convenient plants in pots which I could stimulate with the drink intended for myself, my visit to Goldsboro would have been one of endless intoxication.

But the hospitality of these good citizens knew no bounds, and they laid themselves out to do me honour. I visited the cotton fields with their singing negroes, factories, stores in which there were tons and tons of maturing tobacco leaf, and attended the Court of Justice in which the Sheriff, himself a prominent Klanner, though no one was supposed to know the fact, handed out unprejudiced justice to negro delinquents.

But Major Pierce had prepared for me a day of super-revelry. It was declared a public holiday. I knew I was destined for a "Barbecue," but of what its functions consisted I was not told until, with thousands of others, we arrived. We motored some three miles out into the countryside, entering a thickly wooded district, in which was an open greensward. On our arrival already hundreds of people were standing around a low brick building, from whose chimney poured a column of smoke. With much ceremony I was introduced into the building. Here I saw, laid out across an immense iron grill, two pigs being roasted. They had been trussed and cut open up the belly, and while the

roasting process was proceeding, the sweating cooks poured gallons of raw spirit into the vacancy, and churned this up with herbs gathered from the woods. Even the steam which arose from this sizzling mess was highly intoxicating; and the cooks, already bloated, hung over the scene of their endeavours with distended eyes and the vacant stare of the inebriated.

Following our inspection the crowds were summoned around a tree-stump, and from its elevation, an address of welcome, couched in extravagant superlatives, was read to my honour, to which I replied, my brain already seasoned with the first-fruits of Barbecue, in equally ecstatic terms.

Then we danced, or rather the crowd, with myself as a kind of maypole, danced around my person, as an appetizer and to whet their thirst in the hot sun. A trumpet-call by one of the National Guard brought the dance to a conclusion; and the pigs were carried out bodily into the circle. Then jack-knives were produced and each participant in this rite, peculiar to Carolina and of some historical significance, cut a great chunk of the steaming pork from the pig's side, and wolf-like gnawed it, while the more venturesome plunged their hands into the boiling intoxicant and drank the alcoholic entrails of the pigs. The content of many stills was added to give lubricant to the feast; and though the performance began at one o'clock, an hour later nearly everyone, including the Police and National Guard, was in a state of splendid hilarity. I evaded the blandishments as much as was possible; but until well into the evening, when I was due to "make a talk" in the Georgian Council Chamber to a full audience, I suffered from a sore head. As to this speech to the worthies of Goldsboro, I discovered in the Press afterwards the following headlines:

"Colonel Hutchison talks interesting on most everything"—
"Post-war problems are discussed by distinguished guest"—
"North Carolina's greatness is eulogized by the famous fighter."
And I found also "Goldsboro Business Men give Barbecue honouring American Legion and Lt.-Col. Hutchison, of the British Army"—"Adjutant-General Van Metts welcomes distinguished guest"—"Outstanding hero of World War, here"—
"Economic problems portrayed by Colonel Hutchison"—
"Famous British war hero is Asheville visitor"—"Colonel Hutchison who stopped Germans at Ypres, here."

I was deeply impressed by the strength of the American Legion, and by the fact also that the Carolinas and Tennessee contain as

many as 40,000 inhabitants who not only carry the names of Scottish clans, but are steeped in Scottish tradition and lore. In Asheville I was greeted by thousands of rugged mountaineers, men of Scottish ancestry, who had descended from the Carolina Mountains to make a Clansman's holiday.

I spent a week in what I still regard as the most sumptuous and impressive hotel, the perfect guest house, which has ever given me shelter. This is the Grove Park Inn, built throughout of unhewn boulders and rock, timbered with giant logs and rafters in all their native excellence. The enormous hall, supported on unhewn rock, with a massive fireplace, in which were burning six-foot logs, contains one of the finest organs in America, and this was played every evening by a master musician. Let into the walls of the reception rooms and bedrooms were hand-inscribed paragraphs from the philosophies of Robert Burns, Emerson, and other great thinkers. The doors and partitioning of all the rooms were so designed that within one's own private room there is the absolute silence of the mountains. I could gaze from my windows across the Smoky Range, and experience all the impressions that I was dwelling in a log cabin on an eminence overlooking them.

The American knows how to make use of his open spaces. Rich and poor alike on holidays go from their cities, either to the rugged comfort of these inns, which is superlative of the best provided in any of the capital cities of Europe or New York, or join the magnificent standing summer camps provided by the Educational Authorities. I visited one such, Ash-No-Ca. In this I saw some of the flower of young American citizenship, disporting itself in manly games and exercise, well controlled by men of high principle and lofty motive, who are making something big of American citizenship. Even the Scout Movement in England has a great deal to learn from these camps with their swimming pools and running tracks, tournaments and boyish adventures of all kinds. In these respects America, with Germany, still leads the world.

But as a whole my impression of that part of America which I visited was of an astonishing unconscious hypocrisy. It appears to the observer to be honeycombed with uplift societies, while every movement and institution seems to be controlled by Big Business. It is almost a tragedy that this polyglot nation, possessed of such immeasurable potentiality for world good, is so dominated by the material consideration, in which the abstract

is seldom more than a camouflage for the designs of the business man. I venture the opinion that the world is already weary of the business consideration in all its affairs, and that the land which awakens to its spiritual mission will, at no distant date, lead civilization. British stock in America, untrammelled with the conservatism and hereditary prejudices of the Mother Country, have it in their power to achieve this. Without such a mission, America, despite its immense natural resources and unchallenged economic position, must yet take a back seat in the councils of the world.

In America I discovered two paladins among friends. First, Jarvis Wood, presiding genius of the great house of Ayers. He has passed on. But seldom has lived a man with so many devoted to his quiet spirit and whimsical mind. He possessed great gifts with the pen ; and the "copy" which he wrote for the national advertisements of his own house, remain as monuments on the great highway of advertising. And there was, and is, Jim O'Shaughnessy, great-hearted Irish American, galvanic, keen, overpowering with a thousand kindnesses. So long as America possesses such men—and there are many—rather than the much-advertised Al Capones and "Lip Stick Kings" of this world, great is the American future.

I was very busy during the ensuing year organizing for the London Convention. For this I achieved two events unique not only in the history of British advertising, but also in that of the business community at large. By the kindness of my friend, the Dean of Windsor, as Chairman of the Advertising Agents Committee, I arranged that, with the permission of His Majesty the King, we, Advertising Agents, would entertain the American delegates in the private garden of His Majesty at Windsor Castle. This privilege had not previously been extended to any other race. I was called on to make the principal speech at the luncheon given in the honour of our guests.

I had also the honour of arranging what also was a unique feast, namely the entertainment of our guests within the precincts of the Guildhall, a most notable occasion, not alone for the Americans, but also for many of the British delegates.

I introduced John North to advertising. He is now a power in that field, with three successful novels also to his credit. How Fleet Street rocked with laughter over "Boy or Girl!" I, too.

Ambition called me to a larger service than I could render within the fabric of the London Press Exchange itself, in its

shareholding, and rightly so, the property of its founder. I had arranged for the amalgamation of the old-established St. James Advertising and Publication Company, including the vivid personality of Percy Burton, brother-in-law to Lord Rothermere, with my parent organization. This itself had already blossomed forth with five subsidiary companies, devoted to editorial services, art, poster production, and instructional and educational films, each of which was trading with high success.

For the second year of the Wembley Exhibition I was asked to take the chair of the British and Imperial Trade Exhibit Committee, organizing at *The Times* Pavilion an instructional exhibit, one of the most important for consumers ever staged in this country.

But following this Exhibition I desired wider opportunities, and hearing that the great firm of David Allens required a Managing Director, I wrote to the Chairman offering my services. These were immediately accepted, and I was entrusted with a business of peculiar difficulty and of immense possibilities. David Allens was the largest bill-posting organization in the world. It possessed large printing works, specializing in lithography, both in London and Belfast. Its theatrical company not only owned a number of the largest theatres in the United Kingdom, but executed the bulk of the printed matter for theatrical purposes. There was a Press Advertising Agency, and several companies to control.

My first step was to place all these operations under my own personal direction and control, and the Board agreed to my proposal that the firm be known in future as David Allens' Services, and that I be credited with the title of Controller of Services.

I captured from my rival agents one of the largest advertising accounts in the country and filled the printing works with an ever-developing business. I turned my German connections and prestige to commercial advantage, journeying twice to Dresden, and gave rebirth to the famous Odol Company which had perished with the War. I was entrusted with the merchandising schemes and advertising policy of the Commonwealth Government of Australia, again after the hottest competition, and brought new ideas, based upon psychological and medical knowledge, into the field of selling. In these activities I flogged myself unmercifully day and night.

I resigned in 1926 to join hands with an old acquaintance, James

Walker, in another advertising agency which had won fame chiefly by the brilliance of its execution in the design of advertisements for the London, Midland, and Scottish Railway.

Walkers was a happy family and we continued in partnership until the appointment of the principal as assistant to the manager of a great London newspaper.

I do not think that business, as such, ever excited my particular interest. Much too long and during the most impressionable years of life had I served the community for the ends of public welfare. The conception of devoting my life, therefore, to an objective which served alone my personal ends and profit failed to grip my imagination or intellect. It is true, of course, that the technique of industry and commerce interested me vastly. With a mind trained largely in economics, industrial and political, I found the trend of trade cycles and the means which advertising could employ to steady their influence a fascinating study.

But all the time I felt that so long as the objective of industry was solely private profit, rather than greater happiness to the community as a whole, I was wasting a life trained better and experienced in public affairs. Except, however, through the machinery of political parties, the doors of public life were shut, closed both by precedent and by vested interest. When I had contested the Uxbridge Constituency as a Liberal, often there had come a cry from my audience, "It's in the Labour Party you ought to be!" That was both true and untrue. But at that time, there is no doubt that the professed ideals and immediate objectives of the Labour Movement more nearly subscribed to the policies which I advocated and to the views which I held, than any other.

Socialism, however, was incapable of expressing itself in any coherent intelligible form. Adherents of the Karl Marx doctrines with their dismal ideology for the stabilization of poverty, Syndicalists, State Socialists, Communists, Fabians, Christian Socialists, and others, all constituting the Labour Movement, sought to forge a weapon which both in its social and economic use would be many-bladed and cut the body politic into various shapes and forms.

For a while I joined the Labour Party, but was never active either in its organizations or councils; and I was repelled by those who sought, quite obviously, to hoodwink the ignorant and to take advantage of the distressed, to serve their own ends and ambitions. There were, also, in the Conservative Party men of

fine ideals and sympathies, understanding and appreciating the traditions of the race, determined to extend the horizon of opportunity and upon this foundation to multiply the number of those determined on the British destiny. But the Conservative Party, like the Liberal, was honeycombed with vested interests, tied to formulæ which definitely turned its idealisms from expression in the practical affairs of life.

Like many others I recognized, therefore, that the democratic machine had already reached the zenith of its usefulness, and that to give expression to the idealisms of the war generation and those who had followed after, some new form must be discovered. Already the democratic institutions and parliaments of Europe and in other parts of the world had been overthrown, both by idealistic revolutionaries and by unscrupulous opportunists. Russia, Italy, Spain, had been convulsed. Austria, Hungary, Rumania, Poland, the States of South America, even Germany, had passed under the thumb of dictatorships and in rare cases under the control of men of vision, ideals, and determination.

The paralysis and depression which, like a cancer, ate into all the affairs of life had begun its work among the British people. There were tens of thousands, youths, who had never done a day's work in their lives, thousands of others who if opportunity came for labour shirked it. There were tens of thousands of middle-class families, men who had held positions of responsibility with homes of stability, who due to industrial depression and the slow vitiation of national resources, found themselves without income, unable to enjoy State unemployment benefit, eking out an existence on overdrafts and mortgages.

The Labour Party, mostly trade-union officials with vested interests as aggressive and selfish as those of Capital in its most disgraceful form, would make no concession whatever to the national weal, while Big Business, with grandiose schemes of rationalization and amalgamation with the object only of bigger profit on the share market, squeezed out the tried servants of industry and forced them to join the ranks of the unemployed. Not a single member of one of the political Parties stood in the forum of the House of Commons, far less in the sanctity of that of the Lords, and either denounced the hypocrisy of the Parties, or offered to the people, whom they represented, any chance of salvation.

But I had influence, not only in my own neighbourhood, but far beyond it. The writings to which I devoted myself, without

pay or fee of any kind, published for the most part in the periodicals scarcely seen by the respectable classes, and probably unknown to them, but those devoted to health and physical culture and read by artisans and workmen, compelled an enthusiastic adherence of hundreds of thousands of readers.

The mission, born in the slums of Camberwell, in the Domain of Sydney, and in the battles and trenches of the Western Front, became the passion of my life. Business was all very well as a means of livelihood, and my Chiefs did not quarrel with my application to its devices, but more and more my spare time was given to the fulfilment of a task, self-imposed and eager.

To each and every existing institution and organization for which I could use these ends I gave my assistance and support. For two years, having organized a troop and been its Scoutmaster for a while in a slum in Marylebone, I undertook the duties of Commissioner for this district. Then, when I removed my home and purchased a freehold property at Hillingdon in Middlesex, I took the Scouts of Southall under my wing, and allowed them to spend their week-ends camping in the garden.

Mental objective was not the only realm of endeavour. I realized also that an industrial population is neither fitted by the incidence of its labour, nor by its condition of life, to fulfil its destiny without a certain possibility of physical fitness for the task. Then physical fitness should be the objective. For me, rather than acquire the portly comfortable appearance of my contemporaries, I schooled myself to Spartan fitness. In and out of season I preached physical perfection by voice and pen to those of the younger generation from whom momentum in the coming struggle might be expected. To this end I committed myself to several tasks.

In the early summer of 1925 I put the project to the largest and most progressive troop of Scouts in the industrial town of Southall that, if they would equip themselves physically by their own initiative and training, I would take them at my own expense for a tour in the High Alps. With enthusiasm the elder lads, between seventeen and twenty years of age, hiked until their muscles and sinews were hard and supple as wrought steel.

But, in the interests of national physical education, I was not going to permit that this expedition went without its meed of publicity. I arranged that a skilled Press photographer, the proprietor of the most important photographic agency in London, should accompany us for part of the tour. And I arranged, too,

with Pathé Frères that a cinematograph operator, an experienced mountaineer, should join us in Switzerland. It is noteworthy that Pathé's representative, Herman Duvanel, making this his first Alpine cinematograph expedition, became infected with the passion, and was chosen in the year 1930 as the expert operator to accompany the Kanchenjunga Himalaya Expedition, which conquered the highest peak in the history of mountaineering.

The British Press rang with the story of the ardours and endurances of London boys, under such headlines as "Scouts' Alpine feat," "The Scout Spirit," "Fighting a blizzard twelve thousand feet up in the Alps," "Grim struggle of Scouts," "Scouts' adventure," "Boy Alpinists' big climb," "Exciting adventure of London lads," "Fight for life," "How to see the world," "Alpine thrills," "Guided by smugglers," "Night on a glacier," "Nights amid the snows," "Banditti as guides," "A wonderful time." And the wonderful photographs of George Lymberry, illustrating the adventures, filled columns and columns, displayed in half and quarter pages, in the leading national dailies, and throughout the provincial Press and weeklies.

The news, the headlines, the photographs, were all sufficient to stir the imagination of the sluggish and to capture that of youth. The expedition, described by Baden-Powell as being, within his knowledge, the best ever organized, gave a tremendous impetus, not only to the Scout Movement but to the Spartan spirit which finds expression in Alpine endurances from the Scout centre, the Pfadfinderheim, at Kandersteg.

What I sought had been accomplished. The propaganda had done its work. A new trail had been blazed and a fresh impetus to the conception of a nation physically equipped for the far bigger adventure of life.

CHAPTER XXI

ADVENTURES AMONG MOUNTAINS

Boy Scouts—Organizing an expedition—To Switzerland—Climbing the Briethorn—A night out at 11,000 feet—Smugglers—Diary of an Alpine adventure—Mountaineering—Australians in the Alps.

THERE is probably nothing more inspiring to town-dwellers than adventures amongst mountains. Transpose the sublime peace and majestic grandeur of the Alps from the drab conditions, hideous conventions, the rushing streets, the noise and throb of city life—and the contrast is complete. Add to this transposition the arduous and difficulties



of an ascent and compare this experience with that of everyday life—and a lesson is learnt ; for in life, after all its struggles, there is no gain other than a nearer vision of Heaven, and in mountaineering nothing is won other than the satisfaction of work well done and a little closer view of Eternity above.

The objects of the expedition were also educational—the conquest of Nature, a knowledge of her ways and moods, of her structure, of her marvellous flora, and of herself stripped of the conventions and erections of modern civilization. The tour

was also planned to develop that spirit of comradeship and unselfishness already expressed in the *Rover Service*, which reaches its highest test in the face of difficulty, and in the bearing of each other's burdens. There were clerks and a carpenter, a student and a salesman, a laboratory assistant, a managing director and a mechanic—a party of various callings with one common object, Service and Brotherhood, and their development in the arduous and difficulties, the joy and the frolic of a sunshine holiday.

As a guide, I set out hereunder the kit taken, carried, and used throughout the tour by our party, with some instructional notes.

On the man :—

1. Boots. Good strong well-soled ankle boots. The most important item. Well oiled, comfortable, tried out. Best of Army pattern.
2. Good thick wool stockings, undarned. It is an advantage to wear a pair of wool socks over stockings inside boots.
3. Shorts. Blue or khaki.
4. Flannel shirt with collar attached. Blue or khaki. An advantage to have short sleeves.
5. Sports jacket. Tie or scarf.
6. Hat. Any soft hat with brim.
7. Rucksack.

In the rucksack :—

1. Pair slippers or light shoes. Spare bootlaces.
2. Change stockings, and two pairs socks.
3. Thick woollen undervest.
4. Jersey, sweater, or cardigan, pyjamas.
5. Tennis shirt and tie.
6. Towel, soap, comb, toothbrush (shaving gear).
7. Pair (flannel) trousers.
8. Knife (fork, spoon).

Leave ample room to carry food and share-out of maps, compass, barometer, field-glasses, medical aid, photographs, ice-axes, etc.

The party travelled in walking shoes, carrying boots on outside of pack. Shoes were left at Kandersteg and collected at the end of the tour.

It was found to be all that was necessary and efficient, and satisfied every need and occasion.

It is useless to attempt such a hike unless absolutely physically fit. I would say that the age of sixteen should be the minimum, and then only if the boy is exceptionally strong and stout-hearted. Hikes of from ten to twenty-five miles, with full pack—its weight, together with one day's full rations, is from twelve to sixteen pounds, to which also a rope for every six persons some seventy feet long must be added—should be undertaken on week-ends some two months prior to the hike. Camp out every week-end so as to harden the body to Alpine conditions. Expose the skin to sun and wind, so that it may withstand the fierce Alpine sun, doubly strong when reflected from the snow and rocks. Even some of our sun-tanned party were blistered. Get into training as for a race.

The feeding of the party was so arranged that we should have available, at our places of rest, depots of foodstuffs to cover, where necessary, two days' complete absence from any source of supply ; or, alternatively, to permit the party to partake of *diner* and *petit déjeuner* at an hotel or inn, relying upon the carried ration from the depots for a good midday meal and tea.

Here follows a diary kept daily of our hike in the High Alps.

August 7th, 1925. Left London 10 a.m. : arrived at Newhaven 12 noon—calm sea, no one sick. Arrived Dieppe 3 p.m. Crowded train—slight difference of opinion with French official. Victory of Scouts. Arrived Paris 6.15 p.m. Motor tour through Paris including Place de la Concorde, Champs-Élysées, the Louvre, Notre-Dame. Won goodwill of first taxi-drivers by payment. Of second, no payment, no goodwill. Walked through Tuileries Gardens, Place de l'Opera, and Rue de Montmartre to Gare de l'Est. Dinner. Left Paris 9.30 p.m. Six of us eluded passport officials and ticket inspectors as light baggage on the racks.

A good night—thanks to the Swiss Federal Railways.

August 8th. Awakened at 4 a.m. Experiments with the French language, e.g. guard requesting "Eggie" to be less boisterous with the word "doucement," only succeeded in increasing Eggie's activity, the word being translated, "do some more." Very impressive scenery from the train, especially the Rhine at Berne. Perfect weather. First view of snow-covered mountains at Thun, seeing across the lake the Jungfrau, Monch, and Eiger, and to south the Blumlisalp Group. Arrived Kandersteg 10.30 a.m. Hiked up to Pfadfinderheim. This is a most excellent spot ! Greeted by the Chief Scout of Switzerland

and various Belgian, Swiss, French, Dutch, and British Scouts. Receipt of first rations with great excitement. "Snappy" got busy.

The whole troop then adjourned for a sun-bath. Waded in coldest water on record. Little Frankie had a dust-up with the Colonel, much to the detriment of the latter's manly beauty.

Short walk up to the Oeschinsee. Snappy not quite so snappy, but was revived with liquid refreshment. So were we others. The two special Spartans, Colin and Sid, bathed. Returned to village. Made sundry purchases. Everyone heavily armed with Swiss francs whose value they wot not. Slap-up dinner at Mullers. Eggie's expert French succeeded in securing him hot water with the assistance of Snappy. Home, with song, and so to bed on palliasses.

August 9th. Early start planned—for 6 a.m. Awakened at 6 a.m. Coffee with the Chief Scout at 7. Started up the Gemmi Pass at 7.30 after cheering the Chief Scout. Very arduous walk. Snappy conked out. Bill and Stan took it in turns to carry his baggage. Halt after the longest hour on record. Colin again bathed, in a horse-trough this time. Proceeded through pleasant (?) and undulating (upwards) valley to the Daubensee. Halted for light lunch (height 7820 feet). Colin's highest record swim. Passed various parties of gaily-dressed inhabitants, reaching the Gemmi Pass with its marvellous panorama (height 8210 feet). Cloudless sky. Magnificent view of Matterhorn, Weisshorn, Dufourspitze, the Dom and Monte Rosa (the Swiss-Italian frontier). This day has marked the first experience of getting above the bacteria level of 6500 feet. Parnassius Apollo butterfly seen in large numbers at one spot on the way up.

Descended the sheer precipice face perspiring and yodelling freely. The descent discovered lack of use in the knee muscles, and some found it even more arduous than the ascent. Espying a Trinkhalle, drinks were ordered more than a thousand feet up by "echo telephone." Tea at the Hotel des Alpes, Leukerbad, and visited the mixed-bathing hot baths, where tea is served on floating tables. We discovered whilst at tea that the last train would leave in three minutes. Despatching a messenger post-haste to the station, the train was held up for us. Train was found to be a heat-trap: the interior walls and seats were so hot that no one could use them. Train descended along the edge of high precipice overlooking the Rhone Valley and vineyards, and reached Leuk at 6.30 p.m. Received with marvellous



THE AUTHOR WITH A GROUP OF LONDON ROVER SCOUTS, WHOM HE TOOK CLIMBING IN THE ALPS,
SUN-BATHING AT KANDERSTEG

hospitality at the Hotel de la Souste. After an excellent dinner regaled the whole village with song and dance. Found a budding Caruso in our midst in the form of Sid Stewart who gave extracts from Pagliacci. Scout choruses and yells astonished and delighted the natives. Every man his own bed. Colonel seen doing Salome up and down the corridors in his pyjamas. Everyone passed a splendid night.

August 10th. Train from Leuk to Visp 8.30. Spent an hour at Visp and visited the church and belfry with bells dated 1590 and 1671. Market was in progress—the women wearing quaint gaily-coloured head coverings; the carts drawn by dogs. After wandering round the picturesque village we entrained; and having introduced ourselves more formally to the Pathé camera man, Monsieur Duvanel, and his assistant, two of the party went with them on the observation platform at the back of the train.

The railway, rack and pinion, wound up the Zermatt Tal beside the rushing Rhone, exposing as it wound its way up the valley, glimpses of the distant Breithorn, Weisshorn, and the Matterhorn.

We met N. E. Odell of Mount Everest fame on the way up. He exhibited a keen and kindly interest in our expedition. Mush, having explained to Odell the whole art of mountain-climbing, asked him if he had yet been in the snow! Arrived at Zermatt 11.50. Here we had our first experience of facing "the movie man." Two days' rations were picked up and served out amidst considerable local interest. Moved out from Zermatt at 1.15, continuing with frequent interruptions by Snappy and the movie man to the Gorner Gorge, where we lunched. The movie guide had arranged to meet us here in order to carry the cinema, an immense weight. He very cleverly lost his way, inflicting upon us the burden of carrying this heavy instrument up to the Gandegg Hut. Snappy and Rawplugs also decided they knew a better way, and we did not meet them until far, far higher on the Shafberg. The Apollo butterfly was again very plentiful at the place where we halted for lunch. The party secured a large amount of edelweiss on the slopes of the Shafberg, and were delighted with this, their first find. Magnificent view of the Gornegrat Glacier from this point. Continued a laborious journey over rock up to the Gandegg Hut, arriving at 8 p.m. approximately. We were promptly informed that the hut was full. There was no room. Arguments and entreaty were useless; so we walked in, and deposited ourselves and our baggage on

the floor and on the tables amongst the diners. We here met our guide, Adolf Pottinger, whose services had been secured in the train in place of those of Casimar Bic, who had been killed three days previously. It was arranged to leave for the Breithorn at 2 a.m. We had our supper, to which was added a soup provided by Madame who had relented when she discovered (1) that we would not move; (2) that we should be a source of profit to her. By 9 p.m. we had all settled down on the floor amongst the chair legs, wearing our whole wardrobe, with rucksacks as pillows. Very little sleep at all. At 12 midnight, Madame bounced in to announce that if we did not make way for a special party to breakfast in comfort at 12.30 a.m., we should be thrown into the snow. As we numbered 22, and the opposition about 8, this seemed rather improbable.

August 11th. Meantime, the weather did not appear promising; lightning was flashing in the mountains, lighting them all up, and with distant rumbles of thunder. Otherwise it was a brilliant starlight night. At 12.45 the party, headed by Pottinger, left the hut, its way lighted by the moon. The spectacle presented was most mysterious, its tread muffled by snow, and in single file, with the moon lighting the ice-axe points, so that it appeared like a picture from the War—a trench raid. After crossing over about half a mile of shale we reached the main snow-field across the Theodule Gletscher. Here we roped up into groups of three on each rope, and went forward towards the moraine to the left of the Theodule Pass. The guide soon found that the snow surface was pitted with crevasses and was very soft. All in the party had the experience upon more than one occasion of being plunged in the snow up to their thighs. This made progress extremely laborious. On the moraine we left our packs; then proceeding to the more difficult part of ascending the mountain itself. Passing between a vast crevasse with its yawning mouth 50 feet across, and so deep that we could not see the bottom, and the Klein Matterhorn, we mounted to the Breithorn. On the way to the plateau Eric was seized with stomach-cramp, and this necessitated his return with those on his rope to the pack-dump. From the plateau we continued to mount, reaching a point known as the Breithorn Pass at an altitude of 12,500 feet. Snow began to drift across us; and the coming dawn revealed a skyscape of heavy storm-clouds. The guide advised a halt for ten minutes whilst we examined the weather conditions. As we were halted a second party came past us and continued to make



Excelsior!

for the summit. We all had a nip of Kirsch from the guide's flask and waited half frozen in the bitter cold. By vote it was then decided to descend. A fierce snow-storm had sprung up which made further progress impossible. As it proved afterwards, the guide very wisely decided not to press on. We descended rapidly to the pack-dump, discovering that the sick party had erected a three-sided bivouac and were quite comfortable. The film man and Snappy then got busy and considerably added to the cold from which we already suffered. We have no ambitions to film stars in the snow. This had occurred during a gleam of hope in the weather, but within a few minutes a terrible blizzard swept across the landscape. Our party staggered downwards through the blinding snow. Our faces and legs were lashed as with a whip by driving snow, ice, and shale. We groped our way dragging each other along to the Theodule Hut, into which we all crept. The hut was neither in occupation nor repair, but there was a small party of masons who were engaged upon repairing the frontier cairn sheltering inside. We all pressed our way in and remained shivering and drenched to the skin for some 20 minutes. We quickly decided on the guide's advice that it would be best to make our descent to Bricul at once, so we bade a hurried good-bye to Filmy, Photo Bits, and our guide, and commenced our descent across the snow and rocks, slipping and sliding until we reached the grassy slopes above Bricul, some 3000 feet below. Our descent was extremely rapid, taking $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours to reach Bricul. The weather now began to clear up, and the sun for short periods came through. We made a good pace down the Chatillon Valley to Valtournanche. That we had crossed from Switzerland to the softer climes of sunny Italy was at once evident. The bright colours in the dress of the inhabitants, the stucco walls, the softer scenery with its acacias, poplars, and cypresses and the narrow streets, all brought to us the Italy of our imagination. Some part of our clothes at any rate dried on our bodies, and on reaching the Hotel Royal at 11.30 we found that the proprietor had made all in readiness for our visit. We were given excellent rooms in the annexe, two in each bed, each bed being 3 feet wide, the mattresses being convex in shape. The whole party came in within half an hour, and after a wash and shave did justice to an excellent meal, the first since leaving Leuk. Italian cookery much appreciated. Spent the afternoon sleeping. Our clothes, which had been hung out to dry, were subjected to a very violent and continuous rain-

storm. In the evening, after dinner, an improvised concert was warmly received, with encores, by an hotel full of fashionable Italians. Some English ladies produced themselves and demanded "Land of Hope and Glory," a song not familiar, and in consequence shockingly rendered. And so to bed. As an example of the night, Edgar succeeded in retaining his position in bed by supporting himself with his hand against the chest of drawers, whilst Colonel was only saved from being backed on to the floor by packing the other side with chairs.

August 12th. The day was spent in resting. Fraternization with the Italians, especially with the ladies, beginning at 10 a.m., and by 4 p.m. strong bonds had been established. Most of us went up to view the Matterhorn, and the ladies (or with the ladies) from the Belvedere. One lady with the inviting name of Nidia (Needyer) appeared in national costume with baretto and waistcoat complete. A *casus belli* was nearly established between Italy and Great Britain when Curly, aided by others, confiscated the baretto. Friendly relations, however, were established on the way home. After dinner the party stormed and captured Valtournanche—the whole village appearing in the dance-room at the Albergo delle Alpi, where we had established a dance. Enormous popularity of Great Britain! Referring to our ascent of the Breithorn, Colonel has a dim recollection that Euripides said: "Had we succeeded well, we had been reckoned 'mongst the wise."

August 13th. Left Valtournanche at 8.45 a.m. Due to the fact that the party was heavily armed with knives. The local constable made himself conspicuously evident. The hotel proprietor seems to have a very nice appreciation of the rates of exchange, and our account at this hotel, despite the favour of the exchange, was by far the heaviest. We set out with the object of crossing the Col de Volcournera. A word may here be appropriately said upon the subject of Italian maps. With the Italian Army Map it would be quite impossible for anyone except a native of the place to find his way safely through the mountains. We took every precaution with compass and barometer. The way led up an arduous path beside workings upon a new funicular railway. We inquired the way at the village of Signana, but no one could tell us, so we continued the upward path, and met about half an hour below our first objective—Lake Balalsel—two Italians who indicated the route. In extreme heat we reached the lake about 1.45 p.m. and lunched

off pêche Melba, which we made with snow and tinned peaches beside the lake. After lunch the more intrepid and Spartan members decided to bathe in the lake, which was fringed with snow. These were Bill, Colin, Frank, Sid Stewart, and Horry. A bathe in the lake must constitute a record for a bathing party—9700 feet. At 3 o'clock we again commenced the upward journey.

Recollecting last year's instructions to pass between the lakes, we bore to our left, i.e. south-west. The map shows five lakes. Varying seasons must reduce and increase the size of these; and supposing that the hot summer had considerably reduced one lake, we considered that we were on the right path, and continued across immense boulders, and afterwards over a snow slope until we suddenly observed two men three or four hundred feet above us. It appeared that the Col was straight in front of us. Colonel interrogated the men and discovered that we were only a few hundred feet below the summit of the Pointa de Cian, and that we were making for a Col leading directly down to the Refugio de Cian. The two Italians advised us to retrace our steps until we could see two lakes and then pass up a patch of snow "with sun upon it." We went back to the western side of Lake Balalsel and then began to mount, but could discover no Col; but suddenly saw another lake further north. It was then 5.50 p.m., and we decided to seek for the Col above the two lakes. The climb was almost an impossible one without ropes, and after a most tiring half-hour we suddenly caught sight of another lake still further north. We could distinctly see then a Col most obviously marked, and with the sun striking right through it. It was by now 6.30 p.m. and deep shadows were already thrusting themselves upon the valleys. We decided that if we could reach the Col by 8 p.m., believing this to be that of Volcounera, we could easily then descend to Praraye. We therefore descended to what we know now to be the Lago del Dragone and passed from there to the Gran Lago. The pace had been very fast of necessity, and nearly every member of the party showed signs of exhaustion, but gamely stuck it. Darkness was already drawing on, and a final most difficult and arduous climb brought us to the summit of *our* Volcounera. A long snow-slope of more than a mile stretched north-west from this. This did not seem to tally with the description of the Volcounera. At this late hour (after 8 p.m.) there was nothing for it but to rope up and try and make our way into the valley below. We therefore roped up.

The descent was at first easy, but lower down became crevassed, and finally when very little light was left at all, it was found to be impossible to pass the crevasses, whilst the ice became extremely slippery, and would in any case have necessitated some hours of step-cutting even if it had been possible to descend. The realization that that procedure was impossible was very bitter, and necessitated rapid decision. All this was undertaken by Colonel in a quick survey. The party was obviously too exhausted to retrace its steps to the top of the pass, whilst it was suicidal to attempt to spend the night on the glacier face. As far as could be seen in the dim light of the afterglow, nothing but towering precipices surrounded by the glacier ; but upon inspection we found that we could, with the aid of ropes, mount to a narrow ledge about 200 feet above the snow, and there have some chance of surviving the rigours of the Alpine night. The height indicated by our barometer was 11,500 feet. By the time the whole party had reached the ledge it was completely dark, except for a bright starlight night. All the members of the party were placed in positions of security—uncomfortable seats in a pool of running water six inches from the edge of the precipice. Strict instructions were given against sleeping and unroping. We then dined. During dinner hats, spoons, forks, as well as various other articles, descended the precipice and slid over the snow. Wet boots and stockings were taken off and every article of clothing in the rucksack was put on in the order at which it came to hand. Thus, as an example, first a shirt, then an undervest, then a sweater, then a pyjama coat, then a white flannel shirt, then a sports jacket, pyjama trousers round the neck, three pairs of socks, two pairs of stockings, shorts, pants, grey flannel trousers, and a towel as a shawl. Feet were placed in rucksacks for warmth. Some members, not content with their bedsteads, proceeded to play monkey up and down the rock, but found nothing better. The whole night through was regaled with song. Every tune in the repertoire of every member was given a run for its money—ragtime, hymns, opera, carols, and monologues. Experiments were made with echoes and marvellous effects were obtained, the echoes repeating themselves many times from every direction. A feature of the night were inquiries with regard to the time of the only member who had a going watch, which was Bert, who suffered accordingly. The moon came up about 3 a.m., but never penetrated our valley, though a little additional light was given. In a cloudless sky the stars presented

a glorious picture, it being easy to recognize the more important constellations. A large number of shooting stars were observed.

August 14th. About 4.30 a.m. the rising sun paled the moon and the stars, and the face of the rock became clearer, exposing a not very cold, thoroughly happy and very wet crowd of absurdly attired persons huddled on the face of the rock. Bill then went up the rock to see if there was any way over the top, but none was found. It was then decided to attempt the glacier face if it was at all possible. Accordingly the whole party was roped into one string, Colonel leading at the end of a rope some twelve yards ahead of the party, and a descent was slowly made over the very hard, and, in places, steep ice face of the glacier below. We passed over several small crevasses, reaching to the precipice face, attempting then to bear to the left where it seemed possible that a descent could be made across an ice face between two crevasses, thus reaching a shale slope about 300 feet below. If this were not possible it was decided to return to the Col and make our way back across the Cien down to Chatillon. We moved across a steep ice face for some sixty yards, and looking round the edge of ice and rock discovered that any further descent was quite impossible, or if not impossible, extremely hazardous. It was then decided to wend our way back again up the ice and snow slope to the pass, again bitterly disappointed. As we reached again our resting-place during the night, something approaching a miracle happened. Two men were espied groping amongst the tins and other remains of our night on the rock face. We hailed them; and quickly discovered that they knew of a way down to Praraye over the rocks underneath which we had spent the night. They volunteered to show us this. Two large sacks on the rocks suggested that they might be smugglers, and thus it proved to be, but none the less, most excellent gentlemen. The track, which no eye could discover, led round dizzy heights and great yawning precipices. At times they gave us a hand past the more dangerous precipices. The path wound round in a northerly direction, and it soon became clear that the pass which we had crossed was not the Col de Volcounera, but a Col bearing no name, lying between the Château des Dames and Monte Dragone.

When in sight of the Valpelline Gorge, about 3000 feet below, our excellent guides left us to continue their own business, frankly explaining that they were contrabandisti, as we had surmised, and requesting us to make no mention of this in the

valley below. Hats off to good scouts, although they are smugglers !

The descent picked out upon the face of an almost sheer precipice, wet and slippery, was difficult enough, necessitating in places the use of the rope and careful handling of each passenger. It was accomplished with no other mishap than the displacement of an enormous boulder which crashed within a hair's breadth of Curly, shivering the ice axe into matchwood. At the bottom of the precipice we were all most glad to find a stream of water, for during the night we had suffered considerably from thirst although there was water, water everywhere, but never a drop to drink, only to sit in.

We reached the Valpelline at the foot of the glacier of the Château des Dames, and then turning at right angles in a south-westerly direction, bore down the valley to the Praraye Hotel, which we had spotted, arriving there about 11 a.m. Praraye consists only of a rude hotel perched upon a little eminence surrounded by a noble amphitheatre of snow-clad heights, and at the head of what is probably one of the most beautiful valleys of the world—the Valpelline. We were welcomed with every courtesy and kindness and promptly provided with a gigantic breakfast of omelettes, bread, jam, honey, coffee, all unlimited. Most of us then sought a much-needed rest, reviving in the evening to do full justice to another splendid meal.

August 15th. The day was spent in washing and drying our rucksack wardrobe, in bathing in pools which we formed by damming the torrential river, in retrieving new specimens of butterflies—fritillaries especially were very numerous—in gathering myrtleberries and nuts, and in further rest. In the afternoon five of us made a tour to view the glaciers below Mont Collon and the Dent d'Herens, and to see also the scene of our exploits during the previous days on the Château des Dames. From our point of view it appeared amazing that we had successfully accomplished the task of the 13th and 14th.

We then gathered the very last remains of Alpine rose right on the snow line. After another most excellent and filling dinner we gave one of our impromptu concerts to a party of eighteen Italian climbers who had just arrived from the mountains at the inn.

The weather has continued with glorious sunshine and a cloudless sky. Having arranged to set out for the long march to Aosta at 7 a.m. next day, we all turned in at 9.30.

August 16th. After giving three cheers to our most excellent hosts at Praraye we set out down the long rough trail for Aosta. The path wound its way along the edge of towering heights, often with a sheer drop of many hundred feet into the gorge below ; through pine woods and past small patches of cultivation. The sun had soon penetrated the thin heat-mists and the temperature became increasingly high. We passed the pretty village of Bionas just as the congregation was entering church. Passing lower we partook of a light lunch at Oyace beneath a quaint old 12th-century tower guarding the entry to the Valpelline. The going had been very fast, averaging $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour, the whole party going very well despite the ill-condition to which hard climbing had committed our boots.

At Valpelline we halted in order to collect parcels at the post office. It should be here remarked that we were additionally impressed with the supreme beauty of the valley. Shortly after passing Valpelline we struck the high road down from the Grand St. Bernard Pass. The heat by this time was at its zenith, but our pace in no way decreased. In fact, as Aosta lying deep in the valley came in sight, we were spurred to greater efforts. Covered from head to foot in thick white dust we reached the square in Aosta, having covered the thirty odd miles from Praraye in eight hours including all halts. This march must have compared very favourably with those of Napoleon more than a century ago over much the same route. With our tongues hanging out we rushed for liquid refreshment at the Café Nationale on the main square. We then sought sleeping accommodation, and beds were fixed up for us in the huge *salon* in the annexe to the café. The proprietor, a busy and most obliging little gentleman, who had spent his early days as a waiter in one of the large London hotels, did everything possible for our comfort. A bathroom was placed at our disposal, and one after the other we enjoyed the first bath complete with shower since we had left England. We then made a tour of the town, visiting the remains of the Roman Theatre, now used as a timber-yard, passing through the Porta Prætoria to the Triumphal Arch of Augustus with its ten Corinthian pilasters. From there we went to the church of St. Ours where a tiny boy acted as our guide and showed us the 12th-century cloisters. Going into a vault of an earlier date we were shown the altar upon which St. Peter is said to have celebrated Mass. After this we returned to the Café Nationale, where the proprietor had prepared a most wonderful dinner.

The sweet deserves description. From the bottom upwards it consisted of (1) vanilla ice-cream, (2) chocolate wafers, (3) lemon ice-cream, (4) peaches, (5) mixed ice-cream, (6) a thick chocolate sauce. Having done the round once we ordered a repeat course. After dinner we entertained a large proportion of the town with the more select of our repertoire as a concert, it being Sunday. By this time we were the centre of interest in a town which on Sunday is crowded with holiday-makers, and we became embarrassed with attention and with encores. By 10.30 p.m. we were all in bed.

August 17th. Breakfasting at 9 o'clock, we went in search of souvenirs and taking advantage of the rate of exchange, succeeded in making some excellent bargains. At 11 a.m. the party set off in two motors for the Hospice of St. Bernard. The road is an amazing feat of engineering and winds for mile after mile upward along the edge of precipices with many hairpin bends. The heat in the front seats was so great that even the chauffeur, a most excellent fellow, found it necessary to sit on the side of the car from time to time. It was again another glorious, cloudless day, the road being quite shadeless, and we were subjected to the full glare of the sun. The journey is 21 miles, and in this distance we rose nearly 7000 feet to a final height of 8110 feet. Before arriving at the Hospice we crossed the Italian-Swiss frontier and had to have our passports visaed. Our arrival at the Hospice was most extraordinary. We discovered that our fame had preceded us via the *Daily Mail*, and we were greeted there by a large crowd of Lunn's tourists as the heroes of the hour. Autographs and photographs were much in demand, all members of the party being besieged, chiefly by ladies. For about half an hour there was tremendous excitement, whilst each feature of our adventures was retailed to group after group, whilst Curly, plus ice-axe broken by a ton of falling rock, was produced for female inspection at every point. Mr. Lunn personally assisted us to obtain seats in the Swiss mail descending to Orsieres. At this moment the second motor, which had started somewhat later, arrived midst loud cheers. We then all descended beside the lake. After lunch we went to view the fine bronze statue of St. Bernard, the Place de Jupiter, at which spot once rose a Temple to Jupiter Poeninus, and the stones marking the Italian frontier. From here we returned to the Hospice to view the Chapel with its beautiful carvings, the library with its 20,000 volumes, collections of Roman remains and of beetles, butterflies,

and moths, made by the monks. Descending to the kennels we saw the famous St. Bernard dogs, whose keen sense of smell has enabled them to discover and rescue numbers of persons lost in the snow. The St. Bernard Hospice is the highest winter habitation in the Alps. We also saw the Tablet erected in 1804 in honour of Napoleon who crossed the pass with several thousands of his soldiers. At 4.55 we all embarked in the luxuriously appointed Swiss mail-coach, driven by the postman. The motor-horn was a most entertaining affair, being tuned to reproduce the call of the old post-horn. The descent is a series of thrills through magnificent scenery. As the car turned one corner we frightened a mule dragging an immense load of hay, and the whole stack turned over into the road. We promptly jumped down and as a good turn restacked the hay on the cart and set the worthy farmer upon his road again.

At Bourg St. Pierre we visited the room with its original furniture in which Napoleon had breakfasted, and saw also the Roman milestone dating from the time of Constantine.

We resumed our way and a little lower came upon the scene of what might have been a terrible tragedy. By a miracle no one had been hurt, but over the edge of the precipice we saw a motor bicycle lying lodged on a ledge. We assisted some men with ropes to retrieve the bicycle, and even this was almost undamaged. We learnt later that the rider of the machine had leapt from his saddle before his machine plunged into the abyss. About 6.30 we reached the Hotel des Alpes in Orsieres, where we put up in comfort for the night.

August 18th. We caught the 7.40 train to Martigny. Changing here after a few minutes in the train we got into another train descending the Rhone Valley, changing again at Brigue. We had the interesting experience of passing through the Lotschberg Tunnel, some miles in length, and reached Kandersteg at 12 noon. We proceeded directly to Pfadfinderheim and took up our quarters. Crossing the road we partook of a stupendous lunch of ham omelette. The remainder of the day was spent in looking round the village, culminating in the first of a series of most excellent dinners to be followed by real scouty sing-songs. It became a regular practice for villagers and smartly attired tourists to congregate outside the Hotel Muller to hear our concerts.

August 19th. The weather was overcast and broke quickly into rain with very low cloud. This continued for the whole day. It was, therefore, spent in fraternizing with the inhabitants and

in sampling the various tea and billiard establishments, ending as usual with our concert, during which General Bruce, the leader of Mount Everest expeditions, gave us a look-in.

August 20th. It was decided overnight that if the weather was at all propitious, eight of us—Colonel, Stan, Sid Land, Frankie, Horry, Les Sibley, Curly, and Bill—would mount to the Blumlisalp, crossing down to Griesalp, thence to Reichenbach, returning by train. Though overcast, the weather looked hopeful, and we set out at 6.30 a.m., stopping for coffee on the way into Kandersteg, and left at 7.45. We made good going up to the Oschinensee; and then, passing by the left side of the lake, began the best part of a gruelling ascent over grass and rocks past the chalets of the milkherds. In succession we overtook four parties, and skipping out the curves on the main track made a direct ascent over the shale, stopping only for the briefest intervals to get breath. The sky cleared as we passed above the Blumlisalp Glacier, and we were able to peer into its blue depths and examine the crevasses. In just under 2½ hours we had reached the Blumlisalphorn Hut, nearly 10,000 feet at the Hohturli. Wet mists began to drive over, obscuring the landscape, and so we went inside and enjoyed our tinned salmon and biscuits, together with hot coffee prepared by the hut-keeper. We decided, owing to the inclement weather, not to attempt the ascent of the Wildefrau, but to descend in search of edelweiss. At 12 noon, therefore, we began the very steep and rough descent to Bundalp. We had not gone very far down when, on turning the corner, we perceived three figures who were at once recognized as Colonel's brother and his two assistant scoutmasters. This was really an extraordinary coincidence. After a brief and happy chat it was arranged to meet again for tea at Griesalp at about 3.30. We then set off on a voyage of discovery, passing to the west over the Schwarze Fluh, crossing steep slopes of shale to the Agniboden beneath the Dundenhorn. Dense clouds of mist had been rolling up from the direction of Griesalp. Suddenly, as they cleared, we perceived a hundred yards below us a herd of chamois. Startled at our approach they sped, leaping lightly from rock to rock, but giving us a splendid view of their form and movement. We found a little edelweiss; and due to the density of the mists which came rolling up, decided to descend at once to Bundalp, whilst we could still obtain a view of its direction. This we did in thick mist. But before reaching the milking-station, we were afforded another close-up of the wild

life of the Alps, having a splendid view at ten yards distance of an animal very like a beaver in appearance, but rather larger, which was sitting up on a rock beneath which it had made its home.

On reaching Bundalp we entered into the chalet and were given a large jug of fresh creamy milk. We descended farther in heavy rain, arriving at Gricsalp wet to the skin about 3 p.m. Here it was found that Colonel's brother had ordered tea for us, and we were made welcome by a most kindly and affable host at the Grand Hotel. We took off our jackets, which proceeded to drip on the floor. We had hoped that the rain would pass over and waited until 4.25, the very last moment that we could afford ; and then moved off briskly down the Kienthal in order to catch the 6.40 train at Reichenbach, 9½ miles away. Maintaining a splendid pace, we covered the distance in 1 hour 55 minutes in pouring rain. Catching the train, we huddled together to keep warm, arriving at Kandersteg at 7.5 p.m. ; and then completed our 30-mile hike with a record sprint to the Pfadfinderheim. Here we all had baths and a complete change as far as our wardrobe would permit us, going down the road to dinner looking like a scene from *Treasure Island*. At Muller's we rejoined the remainder of the party and had one of the best evenings of the tour, ending in universal hilarity.

August 21st. The day—our last—was again brilliantly fine and it was spent in getting together our things, buying souvenirs for home, arranging our rations for the journey home, and bidding good-bye to our friends. After supping at the Pfadfinderheim we went to our old friends, Mullers, for coffee and a last sing-song. Colonel's brother, the S.M. of the 1st Bookham Troop, with his two assistants, joined us, and were greatly entertained with the best of the items and the novel nature of our repertoire.

After adieux to our hosts with tears in their eyes, we marched to the station, having given the troop yell outside the hotel. On the station platform, to the immense delight of railway officials, hotel porters, travellers, and the usual crowd of tourists, we gave another impromptu display which incited encore after encore. As the train steamed out with our party safely embedded in the Milan-Paris section, three cheers were raised by those gathered to see us off.

The climbing of mountains was in my blood, for my father had been both a pioneer, in fact one of the first members of the

Alpine Club, and a skilful mountaineer. Year after year the Alps lured me.

The development of modern communications has literally brought the Alps to our doorsteps. Of all outdoor sports none is more at once exacting and inspiring nor commands greater reserves of physique and mental endurance than that of climbing.

I am often astonished that in an age of always greater comfort and ease, the sport of mountaineering has not engaged the interest and activity of all those who realize the value of the Spartan virtues.

Throughout the world there are some 470 climbing clubs, and of these not the least is that of Scotland, and certainly the greatest is the exclusive Alpine Club of Great Britain. The hills of Britain are an admirable recruiting ground for the ardours and endurances of the Alps, and now that cheap railway facilities and the economical guest house of Switzerland make of an Alpine holiday one as cheap as anyone spent in our own islands, there is an opportunity for those of our race who have been brought to love the hillside and the vale to experience for themselves the grandeur of an Alpine holiday.

Mountaineering remains the only sport untainted by professionalism, which for me is one of its most subtle attractions. In a worldly sense this pastime offers neither money prizes nor cups, no honours, no championships; yet its rewards are the richest, of the finest quality, offered by a civilized world.

As Cardinal Ratti, now Pope, had once told me, "The stimulation to the mind and spirit of attaining to heights sublime, through tempest and difficulty, is unmatched." The emotions experienced during the struggle with the elements with sometimes 1000 feet of sheer space between the physical body and Eternity, moving foot by foot up the rocky face of some defiant Colossus, or creeping stealthily across mountains of jagged ice, remain rich in the memory.

These are the feelings which give renewed zest to the weary soul, fresh impetus to ambition, a strengthening of the whole moral fibre. Nor is the reward alone of the spirit; the whole physical being responds to the strident, triumphant appeal to the emotion. The moment of conquest is intoxicating to the mind. Every muscle, every fibre, every nerve is braced for the effort. Man becomes tempered like wrought steel, supple as a rapier blade.

These are the rewards of a mountaineer; physical, moral, and

mental tonics, elsewhere unobtainable. There can be no relaxation, no turning back or aside, no rest until the task is completed. Man is matched against grim Nature in all her rugged majesty, buffeted by tempests, tortured by thirst, famished with hunger, subjected to extremes of heat and frost ; and not least is he matched against himself—all his weakness and cowardice, his disappointments and failings, during the long hours of silent struggle, are mirrored before the mind, and as he triumphs so he realizes his power.

No pastime offers such rewards ; in no other leisure task can the whole being attain such heights, such a renewal of the divine. In no other way can age be thrust into the background, the drooping spirit be raised to a fresh consciousness of its dominant, creative mission.

Novices, whether young or elderly, but especially the young, have opportunities equal with the most skilled. Mountaineering is a craft ; the unthinking believe that any fool can climb. There are natural climbers, but there is also a technique ; even the climber most gifted with courage, strength, speed, capacity for instant decision, of iron nerve, will fail if he neglects the simple rules of the mountains.

Three things are essential to the mountaineering holiday : good comradeship, good health, and good climbing. The last is only attainable when the other two are quite secure. Although the declared object is climbing, a holiday and leisure are the first needs of every worker, and so good fellowship and renewed health may be considerations even more important than achievement in ascent or the technique of mountain craft.

From the year 1922, each early autumn, August or September, found me in my favourite haunts, Zermatt or the Blumlisalps, and sometimes in other fields. But I have combined my love of climbing with that of enjoying the wonders and beauty of those high altitudes always with youthful adventurers. Except once, I have preferred myself to lead without the services of professional guides. In such company I have, for example, scaled the forbidding massif Dent Blanche, towering 14,318 feet above Zermatt, described by Edward Whymper as the most difficult ascent in the Alps.

And in the great Scout Jamboree year of 1929, I met by chance the Australian Contingent at the Pfadfinderheim at Kandersteg. Most of the lads had never seen snow until the first morning sun revealed to them the dazzling white summit of the Blumlisalp-



THE AUTHOR LEADS FIFTY-SEVEN AUSTRALIAN ROVERS OVER THE PETERSGRAT AT 10,000 FEET
This was their first view or experience of snow and ice. Glissading, they make a difficult descent down the crevassed icefield.

horn. What plans had they? None. Would they like to tread the snow and walk the ice? A "bonza" notion! So forthwith I undertook to lead fifty-seven of them over the Petersgrat. I searched the village for ropes, and procured also a few additional ice-axes, while the lads themselves borrowed stout mountain boots to replace their shoes.

The wisecracks in Kandersteg were full of evil forebodings. Such a mountaineering party and so many yards of rope had never before been seen. And where were the Swiss guides?

By starlight we mounted the Gasterntal, reaching the head of the pass in a muck sweat, just as the sun tipped the mountains and its beams streamed into the valley. By ten in the morning we were standing on the glacier. There were hundreds of questions to answer, photographs to be taken, notes to be made in individual log-books.

An hour later we roped up, seven more or less on each of eight ropes; and I led the snake-like party across the crevassed Petersgrat, mounting always to over 10,000 feet, when suddenly, almost Lilliputian, the Mutthorn Hut lay at our feet in its setting of immense blue-green ice.

After a mammoth luncheon, we snowballed furiously among the rocky crevasses and snow-drifts. What joy, what excitement supreme, to snowball fight with youths of eighteen to twenty-three who had never before held snow in their hands! And in the afternoon some twenty of us scaled to the top of the Mutthorn itself.

The hut is planned by the Swiss Alpine Club to hold forty-two persons. On its two shelves after supper, and by eight in the evening, we were all tucked into blankets, and slept the sleep of the good, the just, and the utterly exhausted.

A gale, laden with snow, was blowing and it had not abated by dawn when we rose. The morning was as infernally frigid as hell is reputed to be hot. As we left the sheltered avenue in which the hut is situated the full fury of a gale, charged with fine particles of ice, swept from the crest of the Grat, met us in the face, smiting the exposed limbs like a whip-lash.

With bowed head I led the long party, cautiously zigzagging over the crevassed ice-field, and trudging heavily through the new snow.

But as we rose to the summit of the Petersgrat the clouds suddenly parted, and swept back on each side, like the curtains of a stage, revealing in the centre the pinnacle of the Bietschorn

and in every direction one of the most matchless panoramas of the world.

The Great Architect of the Universe is indeed magnanimous, for on this day and at this hour, when none other would suffice, He showed to the first-fruits of a new generation from the Southern Hemisphere the most perfect of His works.

The sun shone splendidly. Then we glissaded, and slithered, on every part of the human anatomy, down, steep down, very steep down, over ice and frozen snow, dodging crevasses until we halted for a breather where the rocks cling to the snow line. Then down again, steep down, over loose shale, very precipitous; hungry and thirsty, with tightened belts, pulses beating double time, faces whipped scarlet by wind and sun, until we reached the lonely inn lying at the top of the Lötschental.

Lonely, but lovely, no finer setting. No more splendid repast, for fifty-eight growing youngsters with the appetites of ravenous wolves. And here we met that great Scout, my friend, Henry Rymill, well beloved, who, from Kandersteg, had brought the other forty of the Contingent to greet us and feast with us.

We spent five more days together, then a brief meeting in London, and when finally we parted, all wept.

I had discovered Australia!

Australia, with all its economic difficulties, will never be bankrupt in its men. Almost daily I remember my friends, Bob O'Connell, Arthur Peveril, Waters, Gawler, Big Stoner, Wells, Stan Cordell, "Sidce" Cole, Boss Walker, and the rest. How the States of Australia were knit in this adventurous pilgrimage!

The seas which divide this great country from the Homeland are far too wide. How often I wish that an immense correspondence with all kinds and conditions of men, and some twenty various activities in public life permitted me to keep warmer these friendships. But with what joy I receive messages and letters, some of which latter take me almost a year to answer.

I have climbed, also, for two seasons with lads whose daily toil commits them to the bowels of the earth—pit boys. From the black grime of the coal-mine to the snow-white peak of a mountain!

If I have dissipated my chances and opportunities for cutting more niches on the ice-axe of first-class ascents achieved, I have richly sampled rarer vintages of mountaineering experience than have most climbers. For each year I have drunk deeply of the immeasurable pleasure, not only of guideless climbing, but in

leading the first footsteps of youngsters most of whom have never before witnessed the sight of a mountain, have never previously seen ice except on a duck-pond, or snow except the grey slush of an industrial town.

My most absorbing holiday pursuit has, indeed, rewarded me richly. For this I am eternally grateful to the imprint of my father's footsteps.

CHAPTER XXII

MORE LIGHT

New Health—The open-air life—A new age—Smoke—Actinotherapy—The Sherwood Colliery Demonstration—Mine workers—The proletariat and work.

I CONTINUALLY preached, too, the beneficial effects upon these town-dwellers of the sun, the wind, and a well-balanced diet. I determined that this first experiment, so successful in its production and in its results, should eat right into the heart of industry itself.

Already I had come into touch with Sir William Arbuthnot Lane, who with Mr. Asquith, Sir Lynden Macassey, and other instructed and public-spirited persons had set up the New Health Society, with the objective of informing the public concerning those elementary lessons of health which should be in the possession of every citizen. I put the project before the Council of the Society that I was willing to conduct a further demonstration, but this time definitely within the folds of a great industry itself.

The General Strike had just terminated. My sympathies throughout were with the miners. While others, my friends and those with whom I was concerned in business, hurried out as strike-breakers, civil guards, and bus conductors, I remained in my office, refusing to adopt any panic suggestions.

I turned always towards the social regeneration of our race ; and through the New Health Society became more closely identified in the war which, by propaganda, I carried on in association with the medical profession. The profession itself, no doubt for very good reasons, was, and is, denied the privilege of informing the public, except in personal consultation, upon even the most simple matters of health and hygiene. The profession is forbidden, under most severe penalty, to communicate with the Press, and except under the ægis of conferences convened by itself, to address the public at all.

I, like a number of others, found that we could co-operate as health propagandists with the medical profession.

Being a sun-worshipper I took as my text the sun. I had soon established a Committee with Sir Bruce Bruce-Porter as its Chairman, and with those well-known authorities upon helio actinotherapy, Dr. Saleeby, Dr. Howard Humphris, and Dr. E. J. Deck, with Sir George Berry, both physician and Member of Parliament, as Referee.

During the pre-war era in the social life of the British people there was a marked reticence in all circles of society to discuss matters in regard to health. This has been due partly to the over-developed sense of propriety which was prevalent in the later Victorian age ; partly to an earlier, and perhaps extravagant, dislike for publicity in regard to these questions on the part of the medical profession ; and partly also to an ignorance on the part of the general public, which, considering the high standard of education generally prevalent in these lands, was in itself quite remarkable.

During the period of the War the obligation imposed upon the nation to discover and produce every fit man between the ages of eighteen and forty-five for service on the sea, the land, or in the air, almost as large an army of both men and women in the munition factories and other essential services, in which absenteeism, due to ill-health, would have proved a grave menace to the successful prosecution of the War, brought public consciousness suddenly and dramatically up against the fact that we were a nation very far from attaining to the physical standards set by the authorities, and were, in fact, moving towards decline.

It became a matter of general observation, during the expansion of our naval services, and especially in our armies under the "Kitchener scheme," that men of all ages, and of every variety of occupation, experiencing the open-air life of military games and training, and enjoying the physical exercises and games carried out therein, after a period of a few months rapidly gained in general physique and well-being ; whilst upon psychological grounds there is now historic evidence in proof that these men, even under the most trying circumstances of warfare, were happy and care-free, owing to their new-found health. It is undoubtedly true to say, therefore, that the magnificent tenacity and optimism displayed by our naval forces and armies, based upon national characteristics, were due very largely to the new-found health and freedom from care which an open-air life and prescribed physical training had inculcated in them.

In the period of reconstruction following the War, the Ministry

of Health was set up. From the standpoint of national health and, in consequence also, of national efficiency in spheres both social and economic, this step was of as great importance as any which has been taken in the history of this country. Far earlier than any other Continental countries, Parliament had already imposed law and regulation in respect of sanitation and hygiene.

It became of paramount importance, resulting as has been stated from our experience in a time of national emergency, that a Ministry, with its officers throughout the country, should be instituted for the purpose of examining the field of preventable disease, and in order to give guidance and instruction to the nation in respect of simple matters in relation to general hygiene and well-being, without which the forces of ill-health have in the past inflicted grievous harm both in respect of life and national health.

The Ministry of Health, set up in 1916, has covered a wide and important field of research, administration, education, inspection, supervision, and clinical work, as can be observed from the annual reports published. The whole of this activity is in the realm of preventive medicine. Not only the Ministry, however, but the Royal Red Cross Society, originally a war-time organization, under whose auspices were formed the Voluntary Aid Detachments and similar bodies, have preserved these organizations, and they are continuing their voluntary aid and other work within the social structure of peace organization, again in the field of preventive medicine. Similarly, the ancient Order of St. John of Jerusalem, originally in its activity chiefly concerned with ambulance and first-aid work and education, has developed into other activities, also in the field of preventive medicine. It should be added also that there are several other organizations co-operating with the former bodies and associations which are carrying out work along the same lines.

It can be said, therefore, that since the War there has been a marked increase in knowledge as to general health ; and that a tremendous impetus has been given to the interest of the British people in all these questions. This fact is reflected in the wide publicity given to all matters relating to medical research and discovery through the columns of the Press ; in the development of " health weeks " and exhibitions ; whilst scarcely a day goes by upon which one or other of the important national newspapers and serious weekly commentaries, and, of course, also a large number of provincial journals, does not include in its columns articles bearing upon matters relating to health. Manufacturers,

too, of food products demonstrate in their advertisements that they are fully alive to the new health consciousness of the people ; and these advertisements are written more and more in terms of popular science and with specific reference to scientific discovery and medical knowledge.

The British public to-day possesses an ear willing to listen attentively to the teachings of science ; and any student of sociology must detect in this tendency a fact of profound significance in our national life—namely, that since the War a revolution in thought has been encompassed quietly and undramatically in our midst, and that we have developed into a people whose health consciousness is very keenly alive.

There can be no doubt, for all scientific and medical evidence is in support of the theory, that the physical degeneration to which reference has been made, is due to the industrialism and conditions of labour, to which the mass of our population has been committed since the pioneer discoveries associated with the steam engine and machinery used in our basic industries.

We have been satisfied up to the War period to produce immense national wealth and a high standard of living under early Victorian conditions of sanitation and hygiene, whilst other countries, particularly the United States and Germany, following long in our wake, have been able to erect an industrial organization—cities, workshops, mining administration, and so forth—making good use of the wider territories, better communications and transport facilities available at that later period, and especially to secure, in these newer industrial operations, the discovery and experience gained from scientific invention and experiment, all of which have enormously developed to the advantage of civilization during the past generation.

We are living in a New Age ; and while our chief industrial competitors have been able with comparative ease to introduce better conditions, housing facilities, and so forth, to the great gain of their industrial populations, influencing also the output and psychology of the workers, we, faced with the greater difficulties of older foundations, hereditary prejudices, customs in occupation, and, it may be added, an immense load of both external and internal debt, have been unable to introduce similar methods to improve the standard of life of the community, and in line with the new health-consciousness of our people.

England and the South of Scotland are densely populated. During the past hundred years the population has more than

doubled itself. A hundred years ago there were some twenty-one million people in the country. To-day there are forty-three millions. The mass of this population lives herded together in towns, and is engaged in manufacture. The area of Great Britain is 88,745 square miles ; that of the United States 3,026,789 square miles ; that of Germany 182,200 square miles. These are our chief industrial competitors. The population of Great Britain is approximately 481 to the square mile ; of the United States, 34 to the square mile ; and of Germany, 343 to the square mile. By far the greater proportion of our people live herded together in our great cities.

The mass of our population also spends two-thirds of its waking hours wholly removed from that light which is, or should be, as natural to it as is the fact of the necessity to eat and drink. It must be considered also that, due to our insular position, the atmospheric conditions of the country are largely humid. Every day, every year, the great machines in our factories and workshops continue to produce the national wealth upon which we are all dependent. The chimneys in our industrial centres belch forth their smoke. Our cities and towns throbbing with humanity and its dwellings, from a myriad chimney pots, add to the pall of heavily carbonized atmosphere, which hangs almost always, often visibly so in the form of fog, curtaining our lives, even when we should have the opportunity otherwise of securing them from the sun's vitalizing rays.

A demand for the restoration of sunlight to our citizens by the abolition of the smoke nuisance, which has been urged in recent years by the Sunlight League, has been answered by the Public Health (Smoke Abatement) Act 1926, which came into operation on 1st July, 1927. This Act deals ineffectively with the industrial chimney, and does not touch the domestic chimney. Public opinion should press for a wide extension of the provisions of the Act immediately. The public must also take advantage of every opportunity possible in obtaining the essential ultra-violet of natural sunlight, both in their working and leisure hours.

Modern industry demands output, increasingly. Science has replied with machines, multiplying in complexity and intricacy. Untiring, unsleeping, they work with a hundred hands, super-human servants, accompanied by their unceasing incense to Moloch—smoke. These machines have given of their best to industry, but in giving they have taken away. They have pressed man into congested works, spread a shroud between him and the

sky, condemned him to work in black darkness in the bowels of the earth. Behind these machines the human factor remains, the first and final problem, insistent and still unsolved. Modern industrial conditions have robbed man of his light. What is more important, since industry is for the service of man, health and life itself have suffered. With all its adaptibility the human element is fighting a losing battle. The price of darkness is grim and heavy. It has filled, is filling, our hospitals in every crowded centre in the kingdom.

The argument, then, is this—should a man be less fit than his machine? Should our race suffer and decline, when science daily gives to us new labour-saving devices, better surgery with which to heal unpreventable accident, greater home comfort, and entertainment?

For many years now scientific and medical workers, both in this country, upon the Continent, and in the United States, have been conducting experimental researches into the effects of light and heat, separately and in combination, in regard to human life, and specifically also in relation to the cure of definite disease. It would not be wise, nor, indeed, possible, to name all those who have given of their knowledge and ability, and some, indeed, also their life's work in this research. I may, however, be permitted to name Dr. Finsen of Copenhagen (1860-1904), the late Sir William Bayliss, Dr. Rollier of Leysin, Dr. Hess of New York, Dr. and Mrs. Mellanby, Professor Leonard Hill, Sir Henry Gauvain, whilst also during the past two or three years most notable work has been carried out by the Medical Research Council under the Privy Council and by the officers of the Ministry of Health.

It is known that actinic rays similar to those in sunlight can be produced by means of electrical energy activating lamps of various types.

Although comparatively little has been known by the general public concerning sunlight, it is the fact that at least a thousand private practitioners are using artificial sunlight lamps of one make only, and upwards of one hundred and fifty hospitals are similarly equipped. At a conservative estimate there must be as many as eight thousand practitioners possessed of such apparatus, and about five hundred hospitals, besides a large number of hydropathic and curative establishments.

The practice of actinotherapeutics has shown also that results, which often appear to the lay mind as little short of astonishing,

both in the field of preventive medicine and in that of healing, have been secured either wholly or in great part by what is now generally known as Artificial Sunlight. Moreover, it has been shown in practice that these results have been secured in regard to those diseases to which in this country, and to a high degree also in other industrial countries, the populations are especially subject, namely, rickets and certain forms of tuberculosis, the rheumatic group, nervous diseases, and anæmia.

Considerable attention has been devoted to this method of treatment by the medical press, but until recently the number of persons so interested, whether of the medical profession or amongst the general public, was very limited.

The foregoing reflections were prominently in the minds of some medical and lay workers. The medical workers were fully informed as to all the facts, and possessed a precise knowledge as to what has been accomplished through this means ; whilst the lay workers, interested in sociology, in national efficiency, welfare, and the happiness of those employed in industry, had studied the subject from the point of view of its possible national application. These workers were brought together under the auspices of the New Health Society ; and a Committee, consisting of both medical and lay men, was set up for the purpose of conducting a demonstration, as to which the nation and the Press should be kept fully informed.

It was decided that the mining industry should be selected for the purpose of this demonstration. The demonstration has been also a test and experiment in so far as administration of such a clinic at a pithead, and in connection with industry generally, is concerned, but not in a scientific sense, for all the clinical facts as to the value of sunlight in our opinion have long since passed the experimental stage and are clearly established.

It is important that public opinion should know clearly why the mining industry was selected for this demonstration, since the reasons may not be entirely obvious. There is evidence that mining as such may not necessarily be an unhealthy occupation, compared with other industrial occupations. Mining is largely a hereditary occupation, involving hard physical labour. The unfit are unable to endure the hardships of pit life, and consequently they are generally not to be found engaged in this occupation. Further, the hours of work during recent years, short time and disturbances in the industry, have liberated the mine-workers for considerable "holiday" periods, which in some

degree have reflected themselves in a better health standard. These facts have been duly noted by medical officers in mining districts and by similar authorities who have given evidence before the Royal Commissions on the coal industry. It should be realized that any statistics referring to the health of miners are definitive alone of the men actually engaged in pit work, whereas, in order to secure a true picture of the health standard of that large part of our community engaged in or dependent upon pit life, such statistics should embrace the whole of the mining population over at least two generations, including their families, both male and female. The mining industry was selected, therefore, first, because it is representative of a large part of our industrial community ; secondly, because there is evidence from several mining districts that the diseases chiefly prevalent are those which militate against the well-being, happiness, and efficiency of pit workers and their families and are those which will benefit from artificial sunlight—for example, rheumatic affections, one of the greatest causes of industrial disability ; thirdly, because owing to the disruptions in the industry it was considered that the psychological results here especially would prove highly interesting ; fourthly, because the organization and administration, hours of work, and shift system of the mines easily permit of a considerable number of those employed being collected at a convenient place, with power, water, and building facilities available. There might be considerable difficulty in all or one or other of these respects if, for example, the textile industry had been selected, in which factories are more generally situated in large towns without convenient facilities, whilst it would be perhaps not so easy to gather the workers conveniently for the purpose of controls without dislocation of factory life.

Major J. B. Paget, himself an enthusiastic advocate of "New Health," generously placed the facilities of the Sherwood Colliery at the disposal of the Committee for the conduct of its investigation. I do not forget how, with one or two exceptions, the members of the medical fraternity in Mansfield opposed the demonstration. Despite their resentment at the outset, the "experiment" was carried out successfully.

The demonstration in so far as the lads for treatment and under control were concerned, was not difficult to conduct. The management stated : "There was no difficulty in obtaining boys, who, when asked for, came forward freely in greater numbers than were required. The attendance of the boys at the clinic

caused no interference with the work at the mine. Both enthusiasm and interest have been displayed by the lads from the outset, and the attendance has been regular."

The treatment adopted consisted of two exposures weekly to the ultra-violet light, thereby permitting of an interval of three or four days between each exposure. Some cases, however, where indicated, received irradiation three or four times a week. At first the length of the exposure was two minutes to the front of the body and two minutes to the back, at a distance of two feet from the lamp. The dosage was gradually increased to a maximum of five or six minutes each to the front of the body and the back.

That is, the effects of a three months' course of ultra-violet light upon pit boys between the ages of fourteen and seventeen. As has been noted, a hundred pit boys were selected and divided without discrimination into two groups of fifty each, for the purpose of "treatment" and "control." Boys suffering from any chronic ailment for obvious reasons were not chosen.

One group of fifty was given ultra-violet light and the other group was used as a control. At the outset of the demonstration both groups were weighed and measured. The "treatment" group received twice weekly exposures, starting at two minutes front and back and then gradually working up to six minutes each way, at a distance of two feet from the lamp.

The average gain in weight per boy in the group receiving ultra-violet treatment over the average per boy in the group under control is 1 lb. 12.04 oz.

The average increase in height per boy in the "treatment" group over the "control" group is .262 inches.

Therefore it was shown that the average gain in weight per boy in the "treatment group" had been nearly double that of the average increase in weight in the "control group." Similarly, it was shown that the average increase in height amongst the "treatment group" was 50 per cent over that of the "control group."

The general appearance of the fifty boys in the "treatment group" improved considerably. A marked air of brightness and cheerfulness was noticeable as compared with the "control group." Nearly all the boys in the "treatment group" stated that their appetite had improved and their work seemed easier.

These results were obtained in spite of the fact that the boys were subsisting on a deficiency diet in which there was an almost complete absence of all the known vitamins, mineral salts, and roughage, since the diet contained neither fresh fruit, green

vegetables, salads, and the bread was of the white variety. The average examples shown hereunder demonstrate this :

1. Eggs, bread and butter, tea.	Potted meat, bread, water.	Fish and chips, bread, tea.	Chips & cheese, bread, tea.
2. Bacon and bread, tea.	Water, bread and lard.	Fish and chips, bread, tea.	Fish and chips, bread, tea.
3. Bacon and bread, tea.	Bread and dripping, water.	do.	do.
4. Bread and lard, tea.	Bread and lard, tea.	Potatoes, steak, sausage.	Chips.
5. Tea-soaky.	Bread and lard.	Meat pie.	No supper.
6. Tinned beef, bread, tea.	Bread and butter, tea.	Sausage and bread.	Potatoes and bread.
7. Egg and bacon, bread, tea.	Bread and dripping, tea.	Cold meat, potatoes.	Poached egg, tea.
8. Bread and cheese, tea.	Marmalade pasty, bread and cheese.	Bread and cheese, tea.	Bacon and bread.
9. Egg and bacon, bread, tea.	Meat sandwiches, tea.	Potatoes, meat.	Egg and bacon, bread, tea.
10. 2 eggs, bacon, bread, tea.	Bread and dripping.	Egg and bacon.	Chips.
11. Egg and bacon, bread, tea.	Bread and dripping.	Potatoes, meat, rice pudding.	Fish and chips.
12. Pork pie, tea.	Bread, butter, jam, tea.	Bacon, tomatoes, bread, tea.	Custard.
13. No breakfast.	Bread and cheese, water.	Egg and bacon, bread, tea.	Fish, bread.
14. Bread and dripping, tea.	Toast, dripping, water.	Bread, meat.	Bread, cheese, tea.
15. Bread, butter, tea.	Bread, butter, jam, tea.	Toast, butter.	Bread, butter.
16. Toast, butter, tea.	Toast, butter, tea.	Bloaters.	Milk or chips.
17. Bacon and bread, tea.	Bread, cheesecake, tea.	Meat, turnips, potatoes.	Peas, chips.
18. Bacon and bread, tea.	Bread and butter.	Bread and meat.	Fish and chips, tea.

N.B.—Where bread is mentioned the white variety is indicated.
 “Tea-soaky” is bread soaked in tea.

This dietary shows the need for propaganda work as conducted by the New Health Society in respect of correct dietary.

The management stated: “The interest taken in the experiment by all grades of labour was remarkable. No special attempt was made to induce any of the workpeople to try the ultra-violet treatment, but when it became known that employees could visit the clinic if they so desired, the numbers that attended taxed the capacity of the plant.

“After a short time employees from both the above ground

and below ground departments began to come forward to ask for treatment, and in a few weeks over 300 employees were taking regular treatment at the clinic. These men were of three classes :

- (1) Healthy men taking treatment for the tonic effects.
- (2) Accident cases.
- (3) Sickness cases.

"Men attending for 'tonic treatment' came the same hours as the boys under test. The accident and sickness cases attended when most convenient to themselves and to the medical officer.

"It may be stated generally that the working men and boys receiving treatment attended between 1 p.m. and 3.30 p.m., while those who required special treatment attended at other hours. A number of women and children also attended the clinic during hours set apart for them.

"Towards the end of the three months about 500 patients were attending the clinic, and no great difficulty was experienced in giving them treatment, although the capacity of the plant was taxed to its fullest extent.

"The interest taken by the workers and their wives in the light treatment was much greater than anticipated.

"There can be no doubt that many of the men who have taken a course of treatment are of the opinion that it has done them a great amount of good. In some accident cases the good has been obvious and marked even to the layman."

Amongst those suffering from definite disease the greatest numbers treated were within the groups of rheumatic and skin diseases, all of whom benefited, some of them in a remarkable manner, but as was to be expected, and bears out the experience of previous workers in this field.

It is especially interesting to note that successful results were obtained in the case of rheumatic conditions resulting from mine accidents, and in the case of men also suffering from unhealed wounds.

After the clinic had been in operation for a short while as many as eighteen local medical practitioners sent their patients to the clinic for treatment in this class and in that of children.

Recorded at the end of the Committee's report :

"The Chairman and other members of the Committee unanimously wish to place upon record their appreciation of, and indebtedness to, Lieut.-Col. G. S. Hutchison, the originator of

the demonstration project, for his special and valuable assistance in conducting the inquiry, without which the demonstration could not have been carried out."

But for myself the demonstration had possessed objectives far beyond that of physical health itself. The largest community in Britain is that composed of the mining industry. Its representatives in the House of Commons are a larger group than that of any other industry. What the miner thinks and believes, what are his fears, anxieties, hallucinations, and not least, ideals, must make their impress for better or worse upon the community construction of the country. What the younger mining generation has been taught to think and believe is, therefore, of paramount importance. In order that my campaign could be effective, therefore, I must discover in how far my own ideas would find themselves in accord with those of the mining community detached from the prejudices and preconceived notions of their own home life. I permitted the colliery management and officials to choose for me eight lads employed in the pit to accompany me on a second Swiss adventure.

As the result of having been closely associated with groups of young miners, wholly segregated from the environment of their birth and work, I have enjoyed the privilege, perhaps unique, in being enabled to probe to the very bottom of the minds and hearts of an average group representative of the rising mining community.

While the mine owner is endeavouring to reduce costs, the miner is concerned to increase them; they are his livelihood. His necessities compel him to demand a wage standard that covers all his meagre needs, however little coal may be wanted. We may dispense with the use of coal if we like, but we may not just as casually dispense with three generations of hereditary work-people, not if the miner can help it. The miner tries to make the work share out. He sets a limit to the amount of coal he will raise in a day, and the hours he will work. He demands the maximum power of purchasing other commodities that he can extort. He is a continual thorn in the flesh to the owner, crushed from both sides in his competition for markets abroad. The German miner is exhorted to work ten hours a day that the English miner may not work at all; and in reply the English miner is exhorted to work an extra hour a day for less pay than the German miner may not work at all. This paradox exists throughout industry.

It is a comedy of tragedy to compare the institutions that divide authority in England. There is a King, but his political impotence is the reason most often advanced for his survival. There is a Convocation of Bishops and Lords, but it is disfranchised pending a reconstitution which is postponed *sine die*. Over against these constitutional impotencies there are self-organized bodies such as the associations of Bankers, Employers, and Wage-earners, without recognized status, but of such power in the common life that the greatest recognized institution—the House of Commons—is often as wax in their hands.

Those facts are well enough known. The words "British Constitution" would almost have become confined to a secondary use as a test for alcoholic incoherence, but for this one consideration; a peaceable people, law-abiding, can muddle along indefinitely without any intelligible charter of association provided that it has, like a primitive tribe, a good, powerful taboo.

The rising generation has no use for this taboo which it does not even affect to understand. There is need for a change of heart. The only change of heart that is needed is a complete change of heart. Those who suggest that the proletariat should put their backs into their work, produce more, and do their utmost to preserve the system under which they live, are asking for a partial and an impossible change of heart. Why should they work harder? For whose benefit? For their King and Country? But what are the King and Country to them? Why should they spend themselves in the mere hope of perpetuating a form of society in which they are unhappy, dissatisfied, without the realization of ideals, without pride, without creative joy, without any sign that their lives are of concern to the State, and that their work is going towards the creation of something honourable and great? Men will fall in love with work when work issues in a good and glorious communal life. "We should all pull together." Why? What is that "we"? Where is the bond that unites us in one aim? It is not enough to say, "If you work you will make a living." A man must also be able to make something of life.

There is to be observed in all the affairs of State and in those of social organization stuffiness and ineptitude which have brought Parliament into public contempt and the high offices of the Crown as bywords for incapacity and spinelessness. The rising generation of Britain's greatest basic industry are aware of this, just as much as is any cultured person capable of thought, and who is not afraid to face the conclusion of his thinking.

I had already concluded the manuscript of a first novel ; so in January 1929 I agreed to join forces with this gentleman, and we opened a new office at the bottom of Kingsway, in that new business centre of London which was then becoming the focus of commercial activity. It was there that Bush House, Australia House, Melbourne House, Aldwych House, Astor House had arisen, while some of the largest commercial corporations already were establishing their headquarters in this part of London. My connections with financial issuing houses were fairly strong, though except in an advertising sense I had never done any business with them. But as the result now of advertising, a steady stream of propositions were brought to my office for inspection. Indeed my eyes were opened. The procession included lunatics with world-shaking inventions seeking finance ; unscrupulous vendors possessing patent rights not worth the paper they were written on, seeking hundreds of thousands ; and a few earnest scientists and inventors who desired capital with the object of exploiting things of real value to the community, under their own control, rather than selling themselves body and soul to a dominating interest.

There were devices for cleaning gramophone records, a chemical compound designed to prevent the dog-and-cat nuisance, a gliding curtain, a new method of manufacturing linen from papyrus grass, paper to be manufactured in the Sud swamps of the Sudan, various methods of extracting crude oil from coal, carpet-sweepers and household appliances by the dozen, mammoth circuses and world tours, the promotion of fisticuff exhibitions and theatrical ventures. Each one claimed from his invention or project that the millennium was at hand and that a fortune was already in my pocket.

But though I wanted to believe that this was so, I had read in Benjamin Kidd's *Science of Power*, that "sacrifice is the science of power" ; and my own experience had taught me to believe this implicitly. Moreover, my own philosophy could not permit me readily to accept the proposition, as it was always sketched, that my reward should be so wholly out of proportion to the service rendered.

Have a damn good laugh you Hatrys and "share-pushers" in and out of jail !

But I continued to pay all the expenses, while my brilliant little partner hurried busily around collecting more and more propositions and interviewing more and more persons, some of

whom have since gone bankrupt, in the hope that one or other of them would found a syndicate or a company which would place thousands, even tens of thousands, into our own coffers.

But I did not permit myself to be led very far into this new Garden of Eden of my partner's imagination. I was already exploring the further possibilities of fiction on my own account, and in earlier life had contributed a number of stories to the magazines. I understood that there was an honest penny to be earned from the writing of stories. I considered that I could with certainty at least continue to earn a livelihood, as I had done in the past by the contribution of articles to the Press, by concocting fresh fiction for the magazines, and by the contribution also of serious studies concerning those European policies in which I was well versed.

I decided, therefore, that while my partner continued to investigate the possibilities of face-creams and the manufacture of woollen undervests from wood pulp, I would write an immediate textbook on the most important problem in Europe, namely the Silesian question.

Early in February, armed with German and Polish passports, I returned to Silesia, with the object of examining, seven years after the conclusion of the Plebiscite, the results. Following a careful inspection, covering a month in the territory, I published, in March, a monograph entitled *Silesia Revisited* 1929. I claim, for this examination, that the results can be viewed impartially and dispassionately in an atmosphere freed from prejudice or partisan considerations, and being not tinctured also with an official view-point, it has the veracity to be expected of an account, compiled actually upon the field of dispute, of affairs in which I have actually participated. The conclusions which are reached and the inferences which are drawn are those of a witness who has closely investigated the issues, and has done so with complete impartiality.

My investigation was made infinitely more difficult due to the severity of the weather. The roads were piled high in deep snow, and the season, in this frozen land, was the coldest recorded for 140 years, the temperature falling as low as 47 degrees centigrade. The inhabitants would only go out of doors with faces completely bandaged or muffled. Even the hares, rather than perish in the fields, preferred the greater warmth of civilization and the danger of the villages in which in hundreds they were slaughtered.

Railway points froze, delaying trains by many hours, and Silesia was the most intensely cold part of Europe.

In the closed limousine in which I made my journeys, despite hot-water bottles, fur leggings, the thickest of rugs and under-clothing, I sat and shivered as the car skidded over the ice, or slithered in snow-drifts, in a temperature, within the car, many degrees below freezing point. Although I had experienced the bitter cold of Alpine blizzards at twelve and fifteen thousand feet, it bore no comparison whatever to the acute physical pain extracted by this Silesian winter. The atmosphere struck any parts of the flesh exposed like a violent blow. Frequently as I walked in the towns and villages, I was forced to clear my eyelids of icicles formed from the wet tears which the ferocity of the weather drew from my eyes. My wrists and cheeks when I returned to Berlin were severely frost-bitten.

Despite the cold, however, I was determined to allow nothing to prevent me completing my task, and I traversed Silesia from end to end, interviewed consuls, judges, schoolmasters, miners, artisans, and workmen in great numbers. I made also a thorough investigation of mining conditions, descending and exploring the largest pits on both sides of the German-Polish border, and visited the dwellings of many of the miners.

The Wojewoda, although I called upon him, and although also he arranged an interview for 8 a.m. in the morning of what, I think, was the coldest day, refused to grant me an interview.

Both the German-Silesian inhabitants and the Polish workers showed me every courtesy and hospitality. They were frank and generous, but I cannot say this concerning the new Polish administrators, with the exception of the teachers in the Polish minority schools in German-Silesia.

My work *Silesia Revisited* 1929, except by Polish propagandists and Germanophobes, is regarded as the authoritative text work on the Plciscite and its Aftermath.

Reviewers in serious commentaries like the *Spectator* and the *English Review* said, "Knowing the conditions as he does he is able to disentangle the skein of Polish and German propaganda so that we can form a sure judgment on the issues with which the Council of the League has recently been concerned"; and, "This book is important as giving in detail the results of examination by an exceptionally competent witness." But, perhaps, the most important testimony came from Poland itself, and from one of its most important newspapers, *Polonia*.

“ Much more damaging to Poland is the publication of the English Lieutenant-Colonel Graham Seton Hutchison. He is not only a soldier, but he also spent many years in colonial service, was an official in the English Foreign Office, fought in France during the Great War, held then an important position on the Inter-Allied Commission of Control at Oppeln, and experienced with us all the plebiscite fights and revolts. Hutchison came back after seven years, and visited Germany as well as Polish Upper Silesia. The fruit of his journey is a book which has just been published with the title *Silesia Revisited* 1929. The author shows a great knowledge of his subject, of the conditions, and of their people and their psychology, and is acquainted with Upper Silesian literature. He is also well informed about most recent political events in Upper Silesia, even improbable details. It cannot be said that his work was inspired by the Germans. The author sees in Upper Silesia a dangerous competitor for English coal in the Baltic countries, and treats the whole question from this point of view.”

A considerable portion of my book was devoted to the influence of the Silesian partition upon the English coal export trade. The *Spectator* in its commentary wrote : “ The upshot of his argument may be gathered from the following : ‘ Great Britain is menaced in the Baltic with a serious new rival, namely Poland, whose export power is based upon the lowest wage rates in Europe, and a consequent standard of life at a deplorably low level. Is Britain blind ? ’ The italics are ours.”

And *Polonia* continues : “ He sees in Upper Silesian coal one of the causes of the breakdown of the English coal industry and of the unemployment amongst coal-miners. He therefore investigates the Upper Silesian question from the point of view of the most acute question in England to-day, one which will play an important part during the General Election. The author pictures the Government of Upper Silesia and devotes much space to Grazynski’s unfortunate policy. Unequivocally, he furnishes proof that he considers the decision regarding the partition of Upper Silesia to be a great mistake and would like to rectify it, because he is of the opinion that thereby the English coal industry would lose its most dangerous competitor and be able to give work to its unemployed. Hutchison’s book can do us incalculable harm and is the most dangerous anti-Polish publication of recent years. He takes full advantage of all mistakes of the policy of reorganization and does it cleverly and

demagogical in order to stir up English public opinion, which as a result of the bad position of the industry is greatly disturbed as it is. Therefore we call the attention of our responsible statesmen to this publication so that they can trouble themselves to combat the influence of this book and remove the causes which directly invite similar publications from our enemies."

The causes of my criticism have not yet been removed. The wage rates of Polish miners have, it is true, been very, very slightly advanced, while also there have been some attempts to establish a European coal combine, but without success.

The Polish Government is to be congratulated, however, upon the steps which it took during February, 1931, to curb the cause of German complaint in Upper Silesia. Appeasement lies along that road.

I have made the suggestion in interested quarters that a possible solution of our own coal-mining problem with its immense burden of unemployment, due chiefly to loss of export trade, may be found in a bargain between the Miners' Federation and the owners. It is an economic truth that the decrease in working hours under the Bill of 1929 must increase the cost of production.

No one desires that the miner shall work longer hours. But if the Government offered a bounty on export coal alone, and the miners agreed to work one hour further each day, or alternatively special shifts were recruited to mine export coal alone; and if the miners agreed that the whole of the profits above working costs derivable from export coal were handed back to the miners as wage increase, or alternatively put into the industry for the modernization of plant, then I veritably believe that not only could the export market on long-term contracts be regained, but also that hundreds of thousands of men could be brought back again into the industry. Modernization should have as its counterpart research and experimentation with the object of providing power and electrical energy at pit-head, and with the further object, at pit-head also, of extracting crude oil and the other chemical products of coal for the use of industry.

This project has never been considered by any of the interested parties, but seems always a solution of the present deadlock.

As the result of my examination of the German pits and of Polish coal-mine organization, I had a series of interviews with the leading English owners and the chiefs of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain. What had struck me not least was that

the German pit-head organization was far in advance of British practice. If only in the realm of man himself, while the English villages are never free from human bodies and homes clotted with the filth of coal dust, in the German coal-mining districts I have never seen beyond pit-head a dirty face, and the modern dwellings of the mining community, built by the managements, are not only well organized, with electric light, baths, electric cooking and excellent accommodation, but are also spotlessly clean. In a British mining district a bath is as rare as a golden sovereign, and the mining community is forced by the condition of its labour to live in conditions of squalor, not only a tragedy in its toll of health, but a bitter reproach to our culture and civilization.

I rejoined my partner in the company-promoting office ; and discovered that though its expenditure continued, nothing profitable had transpired. So we determined to go our various ways, and this determination was mine. He was, perhaps, the most amusing man I have ever met in my life, and though our ways are different, I do not regret my experience in his company.

I had gone too far up the avenue of company direction to retreat hastily therefrom. And when I was invited from highly reputable quarters to be chairman of a new company, of whose business I had some expert knowledge, I readily assented. It was not until months afterwards that I discovered that its promoter, who perambulated the countryside in a super Rolls-Royce car, lived elegantly in a country house with liveried servants, gardeners, trout-ponds, wine and cigars, in fact all the make-up of a rich young man of affairs, was in fact an undischarged bankrupt. The vendor pressed continually for his money, and in order to protect my own investment and that of my friends, in order also to satisfy him and prevent him from forcing the company into liquidation, I was obliged to find more and more money for the enterprise.

The company's operations were honeycombed with agreements and exchanges of letters, with pools of shares and private agreement between directors, servants, managers, vendors, salesmen, and anyone else who thought he could extract a little milk from the cow. I was concerned with the trade of the company, not unsuccessful. But it was superhumanly impossible for any one man to keep track of all that was being done with the disposal of large blocks of shares held by various interests. The end was

a crash and excited meetings of shareholders, whom I led, in a call for public investigation of the company's affairs.

Recent revelations in company matters and as to the operation of "share-pushers" make it perfectly clear that drastic legislation is required with the object of checking the possibility of swindles of this character. Millions of money, capital wealth, the dwindling surplus over standard of life, has left these shores to be expended by unscrupulous persons in high living.

Any two persons with a five-pound note can get together and promote a company. Any one person can obtain a provisional patent for any silly device likely to appeal to the cupidity and avarice of the ignorant. The owner of the patent can become the vendor to the two gentlemen with the five-pound note. The three can form a syndicate for the promotion of a company to manufacture and sell this probably worthless patent. They can find, very readily, a further unscrupulous financier or group with a few thousand pounds to apply to the preliminary expenses of the promotion. The promoters and the vendor can assign to themselves huge blocks of shares on paper worth tens, even hundreds, of thousands of pounds. The group can then go to a "bucket shop." The "bucket shop" will purchase shares of say a nominal value of ten shillings apiece for half a crown from the promoters and vendor, and can proceed immediately to circularize its clientele, having laid the ground bait by a genuine offer, with ecstatic claims for the new company, and can "get away" with the shares at par with a profit of seven and sixpence a share. The "bucket shop" employs gullible, well-groomed young men in motor cars to follow up their circulars, and their visits are directed upon parsons, widows, retired officers, and any others whom they know to be possessed of savings but of no business experience. All the time the article which it is proposed to sell is not worth even the paper on which the patent rights are printed; and not one of the promoters has had the slightest intention of either manufacturing it or selling it. This example is typical of what is being attempted in the City of London every day of the week.

Rather more than a century ago the Government of the day and the Forces of the Crown took extreme measures against those rather romantic gentlemen on horseback who galloped the highways of England holding up its travellers to ransom. It is high time that the Forces of the Crown dealt more severely with the financial highwayman who is destroying the confidence of

travellers on the road of commerce and who is holding up whole communities to ransom.

These fraudulent persons extracted from me the whole of the savings of a lifetime ; but, money having no particular interest for me, I was not dismayed. On the contrary, I was greatly encouraged in the literary effort that I was making.

In late August 1929, just prior to leaving my home for a sunshine holiday in Switzerland, I received a letter from my cousin, Sir William Waterlow, asking me if I would serve on the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs' Committee for the year of my cousin's office, for he was already Lord Mayor Elect. I was very delighted indeed with so singular an opportunity and so rare an honour.

The functions of this Committee are known to very few outside Corporation life. The Committee is one of London's most ancient institutions, and formerly the function of its members was to ensure that the mob in no way interfered with the ceremonies attending the election of the Lord Mayor. In addition the Committee was charged with supplying the City with the necessary number of linkmen and beadles to provide both light for the banquets and police supervision of the Lord Mayor's person. Further, it is entrusted with the organization of the Ceremonial Procession, now an important Pageant in the corporate life of London, and with arranging the Banquet and keeping the Lord Mayor's account.

We had our first meeting early in October, and among the novel features which we introduced into the Procession was a pageant showing the work of the League of Nations. The fact that the Lady Mayoress was a Scot gave me an opportunity to bring to London for the first time in the history of the Procession, and for the first time also in its regimental history, the pipe and brass band of my old regiment the 1st Battalion the King's Own Scottish Borderers, the Edinburgh Regiment, and the pipe band of the 1st Seaforth Highlanders whom I had known so well in India. With the exception of pipers of the Guards regiments those of no other Scottish regiment had previously appeared in London's own Pageant.

Prior to the Procession and Banquet the " Lighting-up Dinner " was held in the large picture gallery in Guildhall. This ceremony, too, is of most ancient usage. Originally the function was for the purpose of placing the candles on the tables in Guildhall and testing the illumination. Although Guildhall has been modernized

by an electric installation, it is still found necessary to test the lighting.

More than this has now also to be done. How in past ages the voices of the speakers were ever heard passes my comprehension, for, up till last year, there has been a general complaint that the speeches could not be heard in many parts of the Hall. It has fallen, therefore, to the Lord Mayor's Committee to be responsible also for the acoustics as well as for the lighting of the Hall. Especially so, since now the speeches are broadcast. I, myself, with specialized knowledge of sound transmission and electrical waves, undertook to perfect the microphone installation in Guildhall. It was agreed by all who heard the result that, not only could a whisper be heard in any part of the Hall, but that the speeches "came over" far better than had ever previously been experienced.

It had also been the duty of the Lord Mayor's Committee to supply linkmen on the bridges leading over the Thames to conduct members of Corporation and of the Common Council to the feast. This duty has, of course, fallen into abeyance, but the testing of the wines and liqueurs at the Lighting-up Dinner is still as popular as it must have been centuries ago.

Those of us who knew him felt, perhaps, that Sir William Waterlow would prove a little austere as the Lord Mayor. Never has a man been more ill-judged, and seldom can he have risen more to an occasion. At the Lighting-up Dinner we realized at once that here, in the robes of the Lord Mayor, was a wholly different character from that which we had previously known. His speech and manner overflowed with geniality. A man typical of London had arrived to fulfil the office of its greatest citizen, and he was supported throughout that year of office by a lady who, being a Scot, might have been regarded as an alien, but who made herself more than well-beloved wherever she went.

In the Lord Mayor's Procession I drove round London in a carriage accompanied by Major Bowater.

The Lord Mayor himself, with a long experience of City life, said that he had never seen the streets of London so thronged with people—the police estimated over a million of them—as on this Saturday.

It had never occurred to me that I bore any physical resemblance to Mr. Winston Churchill, except perhaps that the dome of my head is high, and my face, like his, is round, and my nose, like his, turns up. But at the corner of Threadneedle Street, at

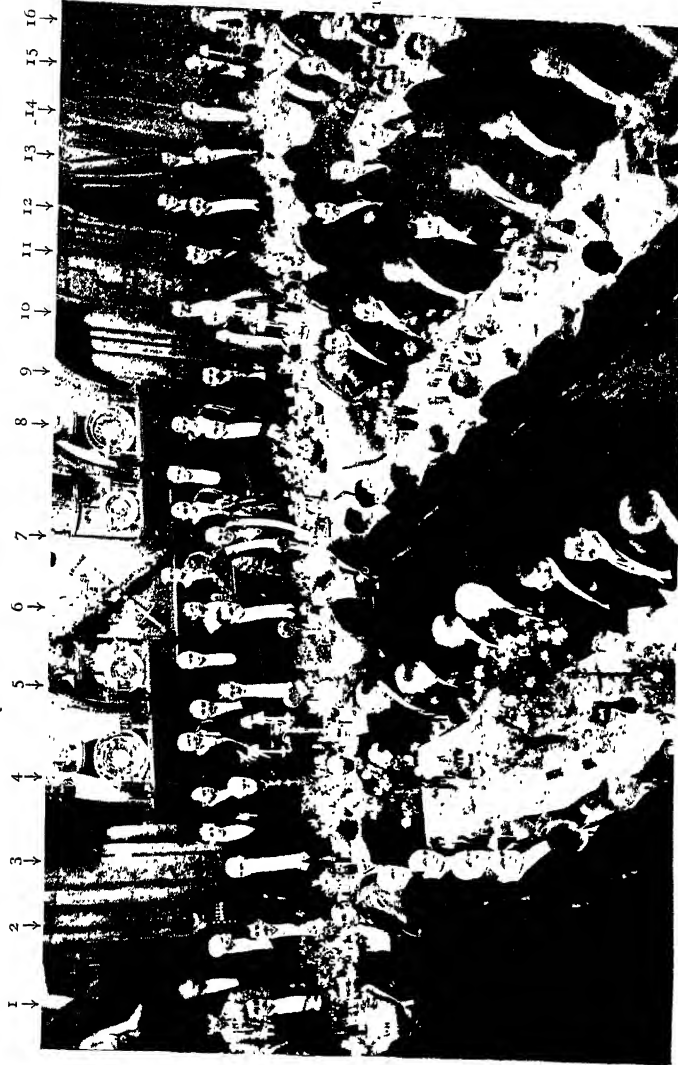


Table 4

Table 1

NAVAL DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE BANQUET, GUILDHALL, 1930

1. Table on Left (Left side).

THE RT. HON. SIR J. RENNELL RODD,
G.C.B., G.C.M.G.,
LT.-COLONEL G. S. HUTCHISON, D.S.O.,
M.C.
SIR WILLIAM LLEWELLYN (the Pres-
ident R.A.),
SIR SAMUEL INSTONE.

(Right side).

THE RT. HON. SIR AUCKLAND GEDDES,
G.C.M.G., K.C.B.,
ADMIRAL SIR E. S. ALEXANDER-
SINCLAIR, K.C.B., M.V.O.
THE HON. HUGH R. WILSON.
THE RT. HON. LORD RIDDELL.

2. Table on Right (Left side).

SIR ROBERT VANSITTART, K.C.B.,
C.M.G., M.V.O.
MR. YOSHITSU HORI (Japanese
Embassy).
THE VERY REV. DEAN INGE, C.V.O.
ADMIRAL SIR ROGER KEYES, Bt.,
K.C.B., K.C.V.O., C.M.G., D.S.O.
MR. JAMES WATKINSON.

(Right side).

SQUADRON ADMIRAL B. BURZAGHI,
ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM GODDENOUGH,
K.C.B., M.V.O.
J. C. ACKERMAN, Esq.
MAJOR THE HON. J. J. ASTON, M.P.

3. At the next Table.

MR. NAOTAKI SATO,
C. P. DUFF, Esq., C.B., C.V.O.
ADMIRAL SIR R. TERNWILLET, Bt.,
G.C.B., D.S.O.
MR. TOM WATKINSON.

1. SIGNED BY OLIVIERO (I.L.F. the
Brazilian Ambassador).

2. MR. RAJIBRO WAKATSUKI (the Japane-
se Prime Minister).

3. HERR E. SHIMAM (I.L.F. the German
Ambassador).

5. THE RT. HON. J. RAMSAY MAC
DONALD, M.P. (Prime Minister
of France).

6. MR. ANTOINETTE LARONIER (Prime Minister
of France).

7. THE RT. HON. THE LORD MAYOR (Sir
William Watkinson, K.B.E.).

9. THE HON. SIR GEORGE (Edmund
Foreign Minister).

10. THE HON. SIR GEORGE (Edmund
Foreign Minister).

11. THE HON. SIR GEORGE (Edmund
Foreign Minister).

12. THE HON. SIR GEORGE (Edmund
Foreign Minister).

13. THE HON. SIR GEORGE (Edmund
Foreign Minister).

14. MR. ANTOINETTE LARONIER (Prime Minister
of France).

15. MR. ANTOINETTE LARONIER (Prime Minister
of France).

16. MR. ANTOINETTE LARONIER (Prime Minister
of France).

which point the crowd was probably most dense, a lady burst through the police cordon and acclaimed me, "There's that devil Winston Churchill!"

I raised my headgear, bowing, and replied, "No, Madam, I am wearing the wrong hat."

We returned to Guildhall late in the afternoon and I robed myself in the full splendour of the Levée dress of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. I am told that this was the first occasion on which any man in Highland uniform had appeared in Guildhall. Certainly, as I performed my various official functions as a Wand Bearer, both at the Reception in the Music Gallery and during the Banquet, amidst that throng of uniforms and orders of all kinds, I found myself extraordinarily conspicuous.

I am especially proud of my service on this Committee.

In October 1929 I published a first novel, *The W Plan*, whose story had been born in my brain during a period of sub-consciousness following the battle of Meteren on the 14th April, 1918. The novel, coming at the time of public interest in war literature, was an immediate triumph. Before Christmas it had run into eight editions. The American rights had been disposed of to the Cosmopolitan Book Company, one of the foremost publishers in the Western world. Almost simultaneously it was translated and published in France, in Scandinavia, and in the Czech language, and has since been translated into Spanish. But the peak of its fame was reached when the *Evening Standard* selected this work as the third in its series of plays and novels to be chosen for serialization.

Simultaneously it was serialized also in Scotland by the *Glasgow Evening News*, in the Midlands by the *Manchester Evening News*, in Wales by the *South Wales Argus*, and in the North by the *Newcastle Evening World*; and it has since been serialized in the United States, in Sweden, and by the *Weekly Times of India*.

I offered the story also to various British and American film-producing companies. An offer, cabled from America and reinforced by a letter, of £6000 was made for the world rights, but already I was in touch with Elstree, and preferred to accept a much less sum in order that I could have the experience and satisfaction of being associated in the direction of the film personally. I myself selected Brian Aherne to play the lead, and attended at Elstree day after day during the long weeks devoted to producing a talking film.

The W Plan is a supreme film, portraying magnificent heroism,

profound pathos. It is the story of a man who dared to take the risk, and who, when accident intervened, was not thereby cast down, but changed his plans with the readiness of a reflective and resolute mind. And he found allies in the supreme adventure of War—Espionage.

Personal co-operation between author and film director makes success. The public can well judge for themselves in *The W Plan* how effective this has been. The artists faithfully revive the tremendous days.

It is said that truth is stranger than fiction. What is truth? What is fiction? How much hallucination and mere make-believe? Who in telling the truth does not cloak it under the guise of fiction, or in telling the tale will not dress the story in all the trappings of truth?

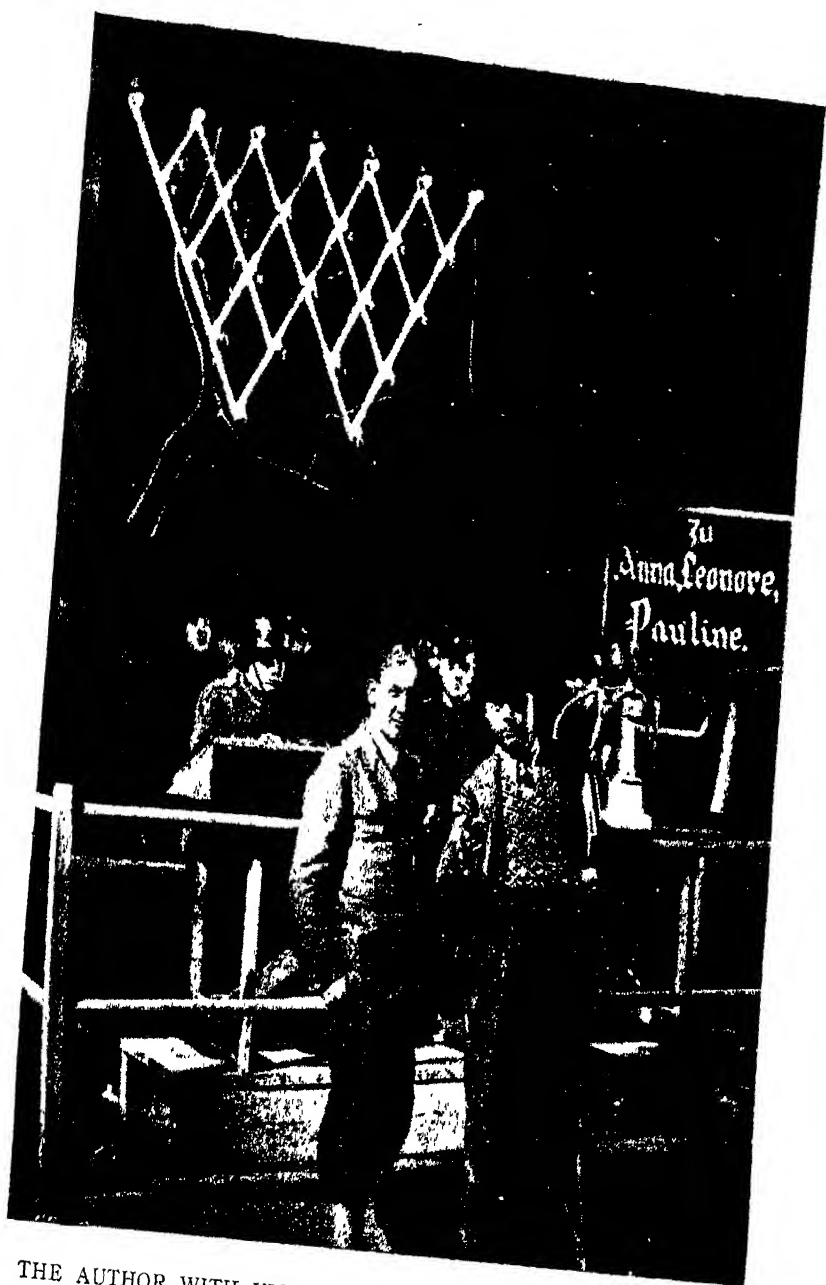
Having seen the film of *The W Plan* the audience may well ask.

The public at large imagine that there is something especially romantic in connection with film studio work. There was never a greater delusion. Both the art and technique of making films, whether silent or sound, are conditioned absolutely by scientific requirements and by the ordinary economies.

So far as the artists are concerned, the work, especially in films in which sound is reproduced, is more exacting and requires greater patience than any other within the ordinary experience of the actor or artiste.

Greta Garbo, Betty Balfour, Madeleine Carroll, the latter my heroine of *The W Plan*, may, and do, appear bewitching on the screen, and it is to their own peculiar triumph that this is so. I have seen some of the greatest film stars, at all hours of night and morning, harassed, jaded, exhausted by the hard work of presenting both the voice and physical person on the screen. The film fan may be disappointed, but this is so, but that it is so is inestimably to the credit of all those who are seeking to enhance the artistic potentiality of the screen.

And thus I found it at Elstree. We were concerned alone with securing results of perfection, and because that was so, in large measure also we were successful. But I can add that Brian Aherne is not only a fine actor but is also a singularly charming personality; and I found Madeleine Carroll, without doubt the favourite among the British screen stars, a young woman devoted to her art, of singularly high education and culture, and personally of a shy and retiring nature. In the production of the film of *The W Plan*, with Victor Saville as the first Director, we were a very



THE AUTHOR WITH VICTOR SAVILLE DIRECTING THE TALKING
FILM OF HIS NOVEL, *THE W PLAN*, AT THE STUDIOS OF BRITISH
INTERNATIONAL PICTURES, ELSTREE

happy family party. They are hard workers at Elstree in the British International Studios. When Hitchcock directs he dominates the floor, not only by his immense size, but by his personality which radiates energy, the mastery of an artist of his craft, and not least effervescent good humour. No one visits the Studio without meeting Joe Grossman, the Napoleon of the Studio floor, and himself a merry, but sometimes unconscious, wit. It is a prevailing fashion to decry British products and institutions. At Elstree British filmcraft is in safe hands.

There are few who realize how signal has been the achievement of John Maxwell. The British film industry is not only great in itself, but its influence, both as a sales force and propaganda medium, as well as its close alliance with scientific endeavour, is a supreme Empire interest. John Maxwell commenced in Scotland, then took over Wardour Films, and from that enterprise Elstree. Since he started production, there has never been a halt, only a brief pause when changing over from silent-film production to all the intricacies of sound. British International Pictures, of which he is the supreme chief, a really big figure with no bluff, and one who commands confidence, is the only production company which has been in continuous operation, with over a hundred pictures to its credit, and in the year 1931 no less than thirty productions. Certain critics have been so busy decrying British films that I am glad, in acknowledging the many courtesies which I have received at Elstree, to be able in some measure to testify to the achievement of the biggest figure in British filmcraft.

The W Plan talking film was produced at the Empire Theatre, Leicester Square, chosen by the mighty Jury-Metro-Goldwyn interests as the only British talking film ever selected for production in American-owned theatres. It packed the Empire Theatre, five houses daily, for a whole week, and drew bigger money than had previously been taken by any other film in this theatre. On the opening night, with Madeleine Carroll, that excellent actor, Cockney comedian, Gordon Harker, and Gibb McLaughlin, most amusing Scot, I appeared in front of the footlights, having been well advertised in advance.

In thanking an acclaiming audience, I said, "One thing is quite certain in all the mystery that has surrounded *The W Plan*. It is that, when during the War on leave I used to visit the famous Promenade of the Old Empire Theatre, it can never have occurred to me that after the War I would appear behind the

footlights which I had so often seen—at least I hope so—from the Promenade, and therefrom present to the Empire's public a talking film of the War itself."

Someone in the wings remarked, "Colonel Hutchison's confession of having mingled with the throng on the Promenade of the old Empire is evidence of the waywardness of genius," a witticism which fortunately did not reach the audience.

I had already completed a further novel, *The Governor of Katto-witz*. Thornton Butterworth, my publisher, had spent many of his years in China, and it seemed to me appropriate, therefore, in order to win his ready acceptance of this new work that I should address him, as far as possible, as would one of his meek slaves of an earlier and, no doubt, blameless life. I sent my manuscript, therefore, to him accompanied by a note, which was without punctuation of any kind, and reproduce it hereunder:

"Light of the world whiter than the milk of white milch cows more solid Butterworth by God's appointment publisher.

"Your Excellency's very humble servant whose poor presence has aforesometimes darkened the carpet in your Excellency's yameen upon which may it please the Celestial Ones to rest your Excellency's feet so esteemed by this ill-favoured creature to rest in peace deigns to address your Excellency's August Personage and this miserable creature is none other than your Excellency's abject slave HUTCHI SO N who seeks to obscure his poor learning through the medium of a letterwriter whom the western peoples denote as stenog which rapacious villainess has the audacity to demand many candereems for the hire of her addled brain and palsied hand (may hungry dragons disturb her ancestors).

"I Hutchi So N utterly deformed lift up my untruthful voice to address your Excellency in humble thankfulness for having permitted my unworthy shadow to darken your Excellency's threshold causing the flowers to wither and the dogs to hide and I send to your Excellency with deep humility a vile manuscript but unusual your Excellency's trembling servant deigns to think which though one of your Excellency's esteemed mandarins in another season has described an earlier the first poor effort of your Excellency's grovelling servant whose head is in your hands as Mister Buchan may God strengthen him and water though your Excellency's slave prostrates himself before the palest image of your Excellency's yameen which seldom this crouching toad dares to enter trusts ran as swiftly as the great river Yang tse beyond Wanshien in the gorges is so this abased slave trembles in

hope less mean than that poor tome translated into all the Western tongues and transmitted strangely over the ether and should your Excellency have been so preoccupied with the recreation of pushing coloured balls with a chopstick this vassal would remind your Excellency that this former hopelessness was titled *The W Plan* and this second beggarly manuscript is titled *The Governor of Kattowitz* which for your Excellency's life and happiness is the humble wish of this poor writer at the palsied hands of the villainess whose ancestors I hope have now been disturbed by hungry dragons.

"It is with much inward trembling that I entreat your Excellency again to receive a manuscript after this poor dog's pilgrimage in the mean byways of poverty and my ill-clad chair-bearers will totter to the gate of your imposing yameen bearing this document about the time of the rising of the lesser sky lantern three days hence.

"I bow to the ground and cover myself with dust."

CHAPTER XXIV

I STAND FOUR SQUARE

Delphiniums—Chelsea—Painting pictures—We want men—The paralysis of England—Dope—The pace and pack of a Footslogger—Pedlars of music.

MY recent years have been filled with versatile activity. Living within a garden, set amid the weathered conifers, maples, elms, and oaks of what was the seat of Lord Hillingdon, my four acres enriched by graceful yew hedges and an unrivalled "Blue Walk," I applied myself, first from the satisfaction of its daily exercise, to gardening. Ambition and the love of emulation drew me quickly as a horticultural enthusiast. I laid out new gardens and ponds, exhibited more and more widely in the shows, sometimes sweeping the prize board, and often also, refraining from acceptance of the prizes themselves. Chelsea claimed me.

Then, with so magnificent a blue walk to furnish, I began to specialize in delphiniums, that stately blue spike of endless size, shade, and shape. I nurtured my own seedlings, bred from the finest stock, and, greatly venturing, exhibited in London at the Delphinium Society's Show.

How encouraging to every amateur that in his first effort he can become a prize-winner at an all-England show!

I exhibited again in 1931, and secured a prize. Most men are susceptible to flattery, but when a compliment is allied with what lies nearest to the heart, namely, the creative task of one's leisure hours, then indeed does it take the form of a blessing. Veritably out of the blue there came to me a new honour. Blackmore and Langdon, the foremost growers and exhibitors of delphiniums in the world, named a new variety, included in the Award of Merit, "Graham Seton." It is described as semi-double, rich ultramarine blue, light shades of rosy purple, and small white eye, good spike, full, but not crowded, remarkable lasting qualities. Vigorous grower. Does this, as a floral counterpart, describe Graham Seton? I hope so. The Delphinium



FLOWERS IN THE GARDEN

James Graham Pinney, the author's son, in the "Blue Walk" of his garden at Hillingdon.

Society, with, among other professionals, Mr. F. C. Langdon, Mr. T. Bones, and Mr. T. Carlile, is making new history, its Annual Exhibition calling ever for more visitors. Among amateurs, Lord Riddell, the President of the Society, Mr. Halford Roberts, the indefatigable Secretary, Mrs. R. E. Docwra, Mr. Hill of Hillingdon, and Mrs. G. D. Gold, have rendered yeoman service in establishing the place of the delphinium in the borders of English gardens.

And while I rode my delphiniums to victory, my wife with equal zeal triumphed with sweet peas. I always think of the sweet pea, essentially English, as especially the poor man's flower. Its culture places him on a level with the millionaire. Its beauty of form, fragrance, and variety of shade have everything to commend it. A pennyworth of seeds may produce prize-winners in even the most exclusive shows. Only devotion and love, and perhaps an added spice of luck, can produce sweet peas in the prize class, as great as the outspread wings of a large butterfly, and only sloth and ill-attention produces the miserable blooms which pass for the sweet peas of most gardens.

There is a truly marvellous satisfaction to him who stages a prize-winning group of beautiful blooms, set like a jewel in the multi-coloured coronet, Nature's crown, in even the most humble village flower show.

Always have I been most loyally supported by my gardener, Fred Hibbert. But he served with the 2nd Worcesters in Baird's Brigade. There lay the seeds of victory.

Sir William Waterlow, with his family, spent a delightful Sunday afternoon in my garden. He partnered Vyvyan Holland against Air Commodore Boyle and his own son in two brilliant and hard-fought sets of tennis. A week later, on the 5th July, 1931, he passed suddenly on. The splendid year of his Lord Mayoralty will always be remembered in the annals of City history, as will his character, upright, generous, capable of every self-sacrifice, genial. He was a man of the highest integrity, both in his personal life and in regard to the manifold affairs with which he dealt, the perfect pattern of an English gentleman. His funeral was private; but there were so many who desired to mark with honour his passing that the service was held in St. Paul's Cathedral. That vast edifice was thronged to its doors with a great host of public men, representing the Departments of State, Foreign Embassies, Legations, and the Corporation of the City, as well as many friends. There were, too, masses of

the public whom he had served, both as a model employer of labour, and as the First Citizen of the greatest city in the world. Many shed tears that there had been taken from among them one, the imprint of whose character has set a standard of conduct in public and commercial life, and who, in his dealings with his fellow-men, tempered justice with mercy, and was invariably kind.

And I have applied myself assiduously, also, to painting, experimentation always. I forsook water-colours for oils, a medium more satisfying to swift moods and the aggressive temperament. I sent my products to exhibitions and was asked to remove them. But I have persevered, encouraged both by tolerant friends and professional artists.

Writing of war, I painted war. Two orders for battle pictures, scenes of cavalry actions, came in. I served on the Committee of the Army Officers Art Society which contributes notable exhibitions each year. With my very accurate knowledge of human anatomy, especially of the bones and muscles of the male figure, due to my early attention to physical culture and health, I made repeated studies of the figure, specializing in the male torso with its classic outline and rich mouldings of muscle and sinew. I found that in the strength of my new medium I could express and affirm to my perfect satisfaction the strength of flesh, bone, and blood, which I realized to the full in my admiration of strength.

Though I was a member of more than one amateur art society I detested the dainty water-colours produced by six-foot men, who painted with the delicate touch of women, pictures almost anæmic in colour, feeble in line.

And I was successful. My "tempestuous oils" won the approval of the critics. P. G. Konody pleased me much by a very favourable comment upon a large painting presented to the Royal Air Force, of the Recruits in their Physical Training Display at the Royal Tournament. He applauded my "ambitious rendering of rhythmic movement." And I exhibited at the R.O.I.

And so I built, in the form of a Swiss chalet, in my garden, a large studio, both for painting and literary work. A perfect haven of creative emotionalism.

And I saw other sides of Chelsea. Bernard Adams painted my portrait. I am fortunate as a lover of creative art in having come under the influence of his rare and refreshing mind. It is steeped in wisdom and humour. He possesses that infinite

capacity for taking pains which is genius. In character he is very similar to my friend Walter Baird. The art of Bernard Adams will live while that of others falls in price with their death, or merely flakes away. This is a word of warning to those who wish their portraits chronicled for history. The walls of colleges and schools, city chambers and Board rooms are hung with portraits which commanded monster prices in their day, and which will not live a hundred years, probably not half a century. Pigment possesses its science as well as its artistry. I have seen front doors painted with greater skill than some portraits which have been a centre of attraction in a season of the Royal Academy.

And while I was pursuing the arts of literature, painting, and horticulture, perhaps far removed from soldiering, but proceeding methodically also at "Footslogger's" pace, I was immersed in many public activities, not the least, perhaps, of which has been inside my own "Trade Union," ex-service men, the Old Contemptibles Association, and the British Legion. I have flown thousands of miles, motored as many more. And I produced the R.A.F. song-march, sung by recruits at the Royal Tournament, 1931. It is named "Out of the Blue."

But perhaps the dominating enthusiasm has been the infusion of a new spirit in public life.

Although a Footslogger, I ride again with the Valkyries.

We want Men ! Never more urgently did the country require them than to-day. Men of proven experience, capacity, energy, understanding of industrial problems ; sympathetic with the aspirations, hopes, fears, anxieties, and life of the people ; men, well educated, with a knowledge and sense of geography, history, international relationship ; men up-to-date, progressive, neither the victims of taboos, nor the slaves of worn-out dogmas ; men physically fit, Spartan in habit, who will not destroy the body and brain with an excess of food, tobacco, and alcohol ; men who possess in their blood and bones the matchless tradition of the English, Scottish, and Welsh countryside ; men of courage, capable of sacrifice, willing to incur disfavour, social ostracism, loss of position, for a faith, for a belief, for a conviction ; men to whom property, possessions, profits, material gain, mean nothing in the realm of achievement. Men who are not ashamed to testify that they believe in something bigger than life.

Those would be Men indeed. Supermen !

If, in the present age, Great Britain is incapable of producing such men, our country had better take a back seat in the councils

of the world, and our race become a slave people. Because, quite certainly, if we continue to drift, as we have drifted since the War, that is our destiny.

Let us consider some aspects of the matter.

The War deprived our country of the cream of a generation, who to-day, twelve years after, would have been its leaders in every walk of life. Some few from that lost generation remain. Most have been damaged and de-peeled, slandered and thrust aside. Yet, remember that as in no other generation in history they have emerged from the crucible, refined. If they were capable of leadership then, surely to-day they are infinitely more so.

One may search our own political parties in vain to discover a new outlook, new men, Supermen. We see in each one of them the same faces, find the same names as played in the Lobbies before the War, who occupied office during its continuation, and in coalition signed the Treaty, who are committed to its fulfilment. Their conception after the War was a "return to normal," when any man of vision could have told them that that was the one thing impossible. The Master of Ceremonies, Moloch! But it was this very conception which was rejected by those who had suffered the anguish of wounds, the horror of bombardment, the bitterness of imprisonment, the dread of the unknown, and the shock of being uprooted from the placid peace of English life. Among them was founded a comradeship, intangible yet dynamic, undetermined yet vivid, illogical yet born of Nature herself, transcending all commonplace emotion. From out of the crucible came men, willing, eager to fulfil in British social structure the ideals which through years of sacrifice they had both learned and sustained.

As a people we are slow to change our habits. We are neither volatile like the Italians, nor emotional like the Germans. Not much longer can we be lulled to a sense of security, nor have the main questions of freedom and happiness determined by endless Royal Commissions and abortive conferences which, as history has already shown, produce nothing.

It is a plain fact that Great Britain is in a receding economic position. Yet this is the moment chosen by politicians to increase the benevolent services, to multiply State assistance in every department of life, and to stultify individual genius and capacity, the very geniuses from which the mass of the people acquire prosperity, by strangling, crushing legislation. Rather than turn

their attention to flagrant abuses of commercial usage and of personal liberty, successive Governments, by specious propaganda, have sought to impose greater restrictions on liberty, while the financial highwayman, the destroyer of industry, is free to do as he pleases. There exists no relation whatever between the capital valuation of an industry and its productive capacity or the number of people engaged therein. The surplus wealth, capital, derivable alone from work, is diverted into companies, possessing nothing of any social value to manufacture and which often have nothing whatever to sell, which engage no labour, and which operate only to provide an opportunity for share-pushers to spoof the public.

It is absurd to suppose that it is beyond the wit of man to devise a system whereby the productive and consumptive capacity of the population shall be related. There are millions of people living below, or at starvation level: there are other millions wholly unemployed, on part time, or eking out an existence selling goods on commission or what-not. Nothing stands between productive and consumptive capacity except price fixation, itself based upon credit. Money, prices, credits, are arbitrary questions, controlled alone by man. It is absurd that our farmers cannot sell the produce of our land, when people are starving; it is ridiculous that thousands in Lancashire should be out of work, should be unemployed, with all the misery and anxiety involved in idleness, when there are thousands without shirts to their backs, and that miners should not get coal, with factorics starved of this essential raw material. Money, perhaps, is the most useful device of civilization, invented as a token, the medium of exchange of labour and services. It is not a commodity to be bought and sold.

In the realm of public health, during the last half-century there have been sufficient abuses to fill volumes. Vested interest has deprived the public, for generations, of the discoveries and new determinations of science. Public authorities, charged with the common weal, even to-day are so infected with the preachings of Mrs. Grundy, so fearful of the taboos, that they impose ridiculous, unhealthy, even indecent restrictions upon man and his commune with Nature, between him and the light, from which all life springs, the greatest healer in the world of medicine.

Germany, efficient, progressive, emerging from the humiliation of the War, has refound its soul in the beauty of Nature. More than two million young people, members of the Jugendherberge,

using more than two thousand well-established, magnificent hostels, last year, went forth from their cities to rediscover the god of the spirit in the smell of the loam, the tang of the myrtle-berry, the music of the stream, and the sight of the hills, mounting higher and higher, crag upon crag, boulder upon boulder, even as a ladder to Heaven. The countryside is not despoiled by these youthful spirits, nor would it be in Britain.

It is obvious that if by legislation the individual genius of a people is hampered, then such capacity will find its expression in another land ; and the people without genius, without leadership, will become effete. But it is equally plain that so long as parasitic burdens are permitted to crush that genius, so long and in proportion to the weight of the burden will it be crushed in the fulfilment of its functions.

I have lived and travelled in every continent and in most countries. Each race possesses a virtue, a craft, a custom, call it what you will, to which none other can attain. This fact should be the first realization in international relationship. We might well borrow something from other nations, for we have given them much, without destroying the traditional and national character of the British race.

At this moment we need Men ! Efficient, experienced, courageous ; untied by prejudice or party ; who neither for greed nor self-advancement, nor yet from bitterness, are within the folds of an existing organization ; who physically are fitted to compete with long hours of work, with grave problems and anxieties ; serene in mind, possessing a sense of humour and of proportion ; sympathetic, understanding ; capable of reflection, quick in decision ; not easily discouraged, inflexible in action.

Great Britain has produced such men in the past. They are with us to-day.

Democracy, as it is understood and applied in the modern state, is incapable of grappling with the problems which present themselves. In the electoral process no clear issue upon any subject is ever presented. No man, without making concessions to his common sense or to his conscience, can possibly work within any of the existing parties. No honourable man without difficulty can make such concessions.

No man, understanding the British public, in touch with it in every strata of society, can fail to realize that the modern Parliament gives expression neither to its ideals nor to its needs. The people must be served by their elected representatives, or a

democracy will discover for itself a new form for the interpretation of its will. You cannot eternally side-track questions of bread and butter, of injustices which gnaw at the very vitals of individual liberty, by pledging adherence to this league or to that, by chattering of higher education, or by promising ten bob per week to widows. "You can fool the people . . ."

It is the Government which disposes social organization, is responsible for a people's welfare, and by legislation may control its activity for a century. Similarly, by inactivity, by inattention to the desperate needs and spiritual urge of a people, the Government may cast it into depression, may deprive it of vitality, may sap its national genius; and a succession of such Governments will reduce even the most virile of peoples to the position of a slave race.

Let us look the matter in the face.

Some insidious, soul-destroying paralysis is creeping over the civilized world. It absorbs its culture, atrophies its creative genius, directs its spirituality to new and strange cults, undermines its morality, and seeks to destroy its philosophy of specious propaganda. It saps the virtues of frugality and unselfish wisdom by the institution of a theory of soulless State responsibility for the individual, which its advocates herald as the sunrise of a working-class El Dorado. It exalts idols before which the people solemnly and ecstatically worship, dulled into a coma by threats, or whipped into sensation by the exhortations of the Robot Press.

It panders to the sensuality, luxury, greed, and avarice of the mass. The objectives of British culture are directed by the catchwords of sport, implying dog-racing and super-fisticuffs for mammoth prizes; and by cults, sensual, sadistic, perverted. New arts, pictorial and in plastic form, succeed the matchless tradition of the Great Masters. Realism, in the sense of the artistic affirmation of flesh and blood, drags Art from its high pedestal of simplicity of form and makes it a stupid, impossible enigma to the masses, and suitable conceits for degenerates and fancies for debauchees.

A literature of verbal improprieties, evading the censorship of established law, pours from the presses, finding its way into the eager hands and sensation-craving minds of the new intelligentsia, which lacks both genius and stability. These latter, by means of cocktail parties and of sedulously cultivating the gossip writers, advertise themselves into public acceptancy as Leaders of British cultured life.

chology being what it is, and the geography of the mind as well charted, obviously such a pose makes the dictum absurd. The murderer, if he is not hanged, may wish to say, "Good-bye to all that"; and in times gone by when the scaffold and the method of execution lent themselves better to the courtesies of life, it was the habit of those about to suffer death to make a bow to the public, a pleasantry which the modern methods of the rope or the electric chair make difficult and probably impossible. But in those moments I have little doubt that murderers like best to remember their friends. Intellectual poseurs desirous of committing mental suicide and of being rejuvenated by some monkey gland of their imagination, might, at least, in committing their memoirs have the courtesy to acknowledge their friends.

Fortune and fate together have thrown many things in front of me on the highway of life. Mostly, proceeding at Footslogger's pace, I have lingered for a moment to pick up what fortune has thrown, and I have endeavoured to share the gifts of fortune, though not those of fate, with those who are travelling with me on the road.

Perhaps it is an impertinence for a man of forty, the longevity of whose family proclaims that his ordinary expectation of life denotes that so far it is but half lived, to write an autobiography.

I make no apology. For the gap between the beginning of my life and its fortieth year is not one, say, of twenty years, but of a hundred years. This autobiography, being the relation of the facts of the life of an average man belonging to a society largely responsible for its government and leadership, is, therefore, the history of an epoch. And this is my excuse, if such be needed, for writing it now.

Perhaps, also, there are moments in which I have felt a little fearful lest the activity, even tempest, of my life, covering so many fields of experience, should go unrecorded. High speed road traffic, flying and electrical and mechanical inventions for those who, like myself, play with them, are apt sometimes to extinguish life at quite unexpected moments. With such risks around me, and in which I participate, I desired, before pacing further up a road a little more dangerous, although my gait never went more strongly, to rest a moment and complete the record of my log book.

There is one further consideration, purely technical. What has been written can be encompassed within one volume of a

larger public. If I waited until the perhaps more appropriate moment of my eightieth year, having regard to the fact that I am no longer a Footslogger, and may be tempted to run, I am doubtful indeed whether the log of succeeding years would not make publication of that first forty an impossibility.

Therefore, I offer *Footslogger* as a faithful and true story, in all friendship and without malice to those many who have journeyed with me in my generation up the highway, and to a great many others also who are following after, and may find within these pages some hint in the avoidance of a stumbling stone, some suggestion as to how the burden of the Footslogger's pack can be carried more easily.

Memory, well stored, happily remembered.

And daily I remember my old comrades in arms, refashioning the friendship of those who have passed on through that of the children of the Royal Caledonian Schools, Scotland's greatest institution in England; and through my branches of the Old Contemptibles Association and the British Legion. And lest we forget, I remember-----

"A pretty dismal imitation of a military band," I remarked to my wife, as the strains of a popular air from some itinerant musicians floated from the busy pavements of the Strand, to echo away among the spires and chimney pots. "But," I added, after a moment's reflection, "it must be a hard job to put any pep into 'Colonel Bogey' when your fingers are frozen and the stomach's half empty. Why, I remember when I was Band president we fed the lads like fighting cocks, and all the elder bandsmen possessed tummies as big as tympanies. It is a long while ago now, but they could play. Dances at naughty Naini, and guest nights and bun-worries in Cairo would have been pretty flat without the band. But this stuff is a very poor echo of what I remember . . . there seem to be quite a few of these bands about too . . . poor devils, trying to pick up a copper or two. Usually you see them in groups, often singly with one foot thrust in the door of a pub, blazing sorry sentiment, or some strident march from a battered cornet. I sometimes wonder what happened to my lads, but I expect they are all fortified behind white shirts now, hidden in the theatre orchestras, with snug little homes of their own."

We had passed through the throngs upon the pavement, and were about to turn into a popular restaurant, and, mechanically,

to place in a box held out by a rough-looking fellow upon crutches, when I stopped for a moment, fumbling with the coins, and glanced up at the performers. There was a man there in an old Trilby, blue with cold, blowing a cornet. He was looking at me, but he never moved an eyelid in recognition. He went on blowing and moving his fingers upon the thumpers or plungers or whatever they were called by the boys in the barrack-room. . . . I scarcely recollect the technique. I knew his face, of course, but, for the moment, it was just one of that crowd of thousands who ten years before had passed before me as draft after draft reached the battalion and were swept away. And, of course, the face had changed. Most of us have changed a bit, middle-aged and growing flabby, bald patches, heavier and fatter in the face, and some thinned with wounds and suffering. But he had changed, I fear for worse. He was hollow-eyed and gaunt, a stubby grey growth upon his chin and cheeks ; he was shabby and he looked as if he spent his coppers mostly upon strong stimulant : you know the type ; but I don't blame them. There can't be much fun in playing to a passing crowd in the drizzle and fog of a late December evening in the Strand ; and the pubs are warm and well lighted. There are friends there too with whom to swop yarns, while the dizzy feeling which drink gives blunts the senses to life's misfortunes, and perhaps makes sleep more soft and sweet too, beneath an archway, or in some musty lodging-house by the waterside. We looked at each other across the shabby box held out for alms and I knew him. . . . The name doesn't matter. Call him Smith. What a torture memory can be ! In a rush half a dozen pictures screened themselves upon my brain.

First, it was in India, at that joyful little hill station of Ranikhet, where I was producing a musical burlesque to keep the lads out of mischief and to while away the hours of laziness, which might have got me into trouble, too. The play was *Bluebeard Reblued*, and I had played Fatima to Smith's Bluebeard. He was a great strapping lad in those days, his size made still more ludicrous by vast cushion paddings below the belt. On the last night, after heaven knows how many drinks in the Sergeants' mess, but, of course, I was the leading lady, in a mad dance we had both pranced over the footlights into the orchestra, an unrehearsed diversion which brought the house down. It was our concluding duct. I rose and cried, "God save the King," and "Heaven

court martial.

Then, at the Coronation Durbar we had furnished the King's Own String Band, the prefix letters of the regimental title, in transposition, forming an admirably witty sobriquet. The orchestra was playing soft music behind the throne when the King-Emperor held his Investiture. Suddenly in the midst of this solemn ceremony, to which were gathered the first princes of the Indian Empire, chieftains from far-away hill states owing some allegiance to the British Empire, great ladies, statesmen and soldiers from Simla and Calcutta, there was a cry of fire, and a sheet of flame shot up from the canvas wall. There might have been panic. A boyish figure in a red coat and tartan trews appeared upon the Royal dais, and standing beside King George, addressed him: "Some b——'s done it on purpose." That's all he said. The King laughed. The bandsman had played, no doubt all unwittingly, upon an instrument, and it responded to his touch. The King laughed: and thus an ugly situation was relieved.

Then again, after Mars had rudely snatched the pipes from Pan, and, with discord, blew his strident note, I could see Smith in a new setting. What precisely it is in military organization which provides that in warfare the players of music shall be transformed into bearers of stretchers, those who give first succour to the wounded and close the eyes of the dead, I do not know. Whether this arrangement is one of convenience, or whether there may be some other reason of deeper psychological significance, the regimental officer has never been informed. But certain it is that the facility to make melody produces a mind reposeful in privation, tender and soothing towards the suffering, and of that truth--witness the stretcher-bearers.

A picture floated before my eyes. The sun glares down upon the trenches. It is the first day of summer after many rains. In the front line men are washing: here one with his periscope perched on the parados shaves off his three weeks' growth; another, naked to the waist, stretches his fine young limbs in the morning air. Red-haired Jock, "Ginger," is busy with his chanter crooning a little group to slumber and to happy memories of glen and hillside; while Smith, seated upon an upturned ammunition box, is dispensing bandages and iodine, with a few words of cruel counsel, to those whose hands and legs have been torn in the maddening, bloody task of erecting barbed-wire

entanglements by starlight. Only the sentry, with eyes glued to the canvas-covered look-out hole in the parapet, appears to take an interest in that life beyond the meshes of the barbed wire, where a crazy line of sand-bags shapes an enemy's entrenched position. The jagged tower of Ypres Cloth Hall keeps silent watch.

Suddenly a green and yellow cloud belches forth from the enemy's line. It wends its way, sometimes snake-like and sinuous, sometimes unrolling itself in wide ethereal fronds, or in massed blossom, opening like the petals of a flower.

A mighty uproar, crash and noise. Rifles are seized. The trench is filled with dust and smoke, red, green, black, yellow. A rifle spits here and there. A machine-gun fitfully opens its stuttering fire. And all the time, slowly creeps on a great green cloud. It seems to roll over the edge of the parapet. Wild-eyed men, who feverishly work the bolts of rifles, and jam clip after clip of ammunition into breaches, are gripped in its octopus embrace. What was once "Oxford Street" is now a shambles; some dead, others choked with gas fumes; and others, heaped with tattered clothing and mangled bodies, lie gasping in the wreckage of a strong point. With a final wail of agony the chanter falls from the hand of Jock. His red hair will never gladden the sun again; his face is grey; his hair clotted and matted in a dull crimson. It is war—deadly war. Smith is there—see him ease that leg, deftly bandage a shattered hand, or plug a gaping wound with a shell dressing. The cry of "Stretcher-bearer" goes up from the beleaguered trench. There is Smith giving that help which he alone can give, providing that rough administration in which men have learnt to trust, and, which, in the agony of pain when the lifeblood is pouring out, is all that may carry them through to life again.

The front line has gone. The enemy pours across no-man's-land, and with shrill cries enters our line and rushes through the communication trench to stem a counter-attack. But resolute men are here. Headed by an officer, they strike across the open space between the support and the front line. It seems to be suicide, but the party attains its end. *On vous aura!* the battle cry of France. They have them in the back. The enemy is trapped; he turns, but it is too late. Men sway backwards and forwards in the yellow clay soil. It is war to the knife: an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. A second wave of the enemy pours down the trench; but its saviours are there. The field-

through his back by a rocket pistol fired at point-blank range. The machine-gun speaks again. The line is held. The tower of Ypres still keeps its Eastern watch. And there is Smith, in the mockery of a dressing station, stained with blood from the carnage, bespattered with mud, giving drink to a gas-choked lad coughing his lungs out, lifting a prisoner with a shattered leg, handing cigarettes to the living, tenderly parcelling the trivial trinkets of the dead; while without, the wild crescendo of war heralds the entry of new heroes into the orchestra of Heaven.

And I see him again, gum boots over his thighs, ploughing his way through the mud fastnesses of, in other days, Ginchy and Guillemont, his fingers which have lightly bewitched love-songs from a piccolo, now gripped like a vice round the hand-holds of a stretcher. The great shells stream overhead, or embed themselves in the morass, throwing a deluge of mud and metal across the bearers, but he goes on doggedly through the muck and turmoil to the dressing station.

And lastly I see him at the head of the band, a great brass instrument slung round his shoulders, as the regiment upon Armistice Day marches triumphantly through the gay streets of Maubeuge, in the first hours of its release.

I took my wife into the restaurant and then returned to the street walk. Smith was still vamping a popular air, while the collector chinked the small content of his box before the bored or busy passers-by. I regarded him searchingly and moved as if to speak to him. Slowly he removed the cornet from his mouth. Then he spoke. "I knew ye, sirr, when I furst saw ye. Dinna worry about me, sirr. We call oursel's the King's Own Starving Band." He laughed dryly. "Mind ye, my life's behind me noo. The band" he waved his battered cornet—"gets a wee bit smatter every month. They say they go to kick up jazz in hell. But when I'm through I want to play the harp, the only instrument I've never tried. . . . Don't think about me to-day, sirr. I've had my day fifteen years ago. Good-bye, sirr." Then addressing himself to the four or five men who clung to the edge of the pavement, he roared, "Gie them—'Oh, it's a lovely war'!" I waved him farewell, and he smiled softly at me over his instrument.

And so I left these pedlars of music, as they have been all their time. When you pass these little shabby orchestras you will not forget that these men have bravely played before kings and princes

to sustain the majesty of Empire. Remember ever, too, that it was a melody played upon their heart-strings which wafted many a son of Britain to an orchestra, eternal and sublime, in which, always, till these earthly bands have dwindled to a single trumpeter, and then have for ever passed away, there will be a place for a pavement pedlar.

I'm footslogging on again now.

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